A COMPARATIVE STUDY
OF
KAMBA RAMAYANAM AND TULASI RAMAYAN

Dr. S. Shankar Raju Naidu,
M. A., Ph.D., F. R. A. S. (London),
Professor and Head of the Department of Hindi,
University of Madras

WITH A FOREWORD
BY
Padmashri N. D. Sundaravadivelu, M. A., L. T.
Vice-Chancellor,
University of Madras.



UNIVERSITY OF MADRAS,
MADRAS.
1971

MADRAS UNIVERSITY HINDI DEPARTMENT

PUBLICATION No. 3

General Editor

Dr. S. SHANKAR RAJU NAIDU,

M. A., Ph.D., F. R. A. S. (LONDON),

Professor and Head of the Department of Hindi,

University of Madras.



A COMPARATIVE STUDY

OF

KAMBA RAMAYANAM AND TULASI RAMAYAN

A COMPARATIVE STUDY
OF
KAMBA RAMAYANAM AND TULASI RAMAYAN

Dr. S. Shankar Raju Naidu,
M. A., Ph.D., F. R. A. S. (London),
Professor and Head of the Department of Hindi,
University of Madras

WITH A FOREWORD
BY

Padmashri N. D. Sundaravadivelu, M. A., L. T.
Vice-Chancellor,
University of Madras.



UNIVERSITY OF MADRAS,
MADRAS.
1971



Printed by
The Manorama Press,
168, Jani Jan Khan Road,
Madras-14.

FOREWORD

I am indeed happy to write a foreword to the book entitled "A Comparative Study of Kamba Ramayanam and Tulasi Ramayan".

That Ramayana is a great Epic that has remained popular down the ages throughout India is no less due to the fact that it has been rendered almost in every language of this vast country of ours. It has been to this day recited and expounded to the masses. Among those who rendered the Epic into the language of the region, the names of Kambar and Tulasi Das stand distinct. In the words of V. V. S. Iyer, "In the Ramayana of Kambar, the world possesses an Epic which can challenge comparison not only with the Iliad and the Aeneid, the Paradise Lost and the Mahabharata, but with its original itself, namely the Ramayana of Valmiki".

While the Ramayana of Valmiki takes on the special flavour of the language into which it is woven and reflects the spirit of the unsophisticated age in which it was born, the Ramayana of Kambar and of Tulasi Das, are marked by the peculiar rhythm and nuances of the language of their time and also by ideas that breathe the spirit of devotion that was characteristic of the age. The age and the special aroma in which that Epic is conveyed in another language lend a special charm to it and confer an individuality all its own. Viewed in this light the Ramayana of Kambar and of Tulasi Das have their special traits in spite of their having a common source to draw upon.

I believe that Dr. S. Shankar Raju Naidu with his deep acquaintance with Kamba Ramayanam and thorough study of the Tulasi Ramayan has succeeded in drawing the points of resemblance and of variation in a succinct manner in regard to the theme, characters, sentiment, etc. Comparative study is an accepted canon of modern research. It needs no gainsaying that comparative study of two or more related works enables one to appreciate better each one of them.

Professor Shankar Raju Naidu has brought to bear on his study of the two works his scholarship and critical acumen. I look forward to works of this type coming up in greater numbers which in their own way may contribute to a better understanding and appreciation of different points of view and ultimately help in the promotion of National Integration.

Madras,
2nd November, 1971.

N. D. SUNDARAVADIVELU
Vice-Chancellor

PREFACE

Comparative study is one of the indispensable methods of approach for a critical evaluation and appreciation of any work. The study of a single work as such, however deep it may be, can create only its own impression on the reader. It is only when similar works are brought together and studied critically with a comparative outlook, that one can understand the more salient aspects of the one than those of the others, and thereby obtain a correct assessment of its literary, cultural and other virtues.

There is apparently a very great dearth of such a comparative study, even of the greatest of classics on similar topics in different languages of India, for which the reasons are quite obvious. To illustrate, we can take Ramayana itself which has the greatest appeal to the people of India, and which has attracted the attention of the master poets of all the Indian languages. Practically every language of India has its *magnum opus* in Ramayana. In Tamil, it is the Kamba Ramayanam of the twelfth century A.D. (or the ninth century. A.D.) and, in Hindi, it is Tulasi Ramayan of the sixteenth century (1574 A.D.). It is an accepted fact that Valmiki Ramayana is the main source work for Kamba Ramayanam, while Valmiki and Adhyatma Ramayanas are for Tulasi Ramayan named by the author as 'Ram Charit Manas'.

In this research work, which formed the basis for my Ph.D. Degree from the University of Madras, I have endeavoured to compare Kamba Ramayanam and Tulasi Ramayan, describing therein the Ramayana Literature as found in the several languages of India and

abroad and the background with which the two poets have brought out these classics. The line of study is as follows:

There are seven chapters.

(i) The first chapter deals with the *different versions* of Ramayana, and traces the origin and development of the story.

(ii) The second chapter shows the *influence of Ramayana* over Tamil and Hindi Literatures prior to the period of the two poets.

(iii) The third chapter speaks about the *lives of the two poets*, and the atmosphere in which they flourished.

(iv) The fourth chapter is the *kernel* of the study. It offers a detailed comparative study of the *story of Ramayana* as pictured by the two poets. As Valmiki and Adhyatma Ramayanas are the main sources, they have been referred to wherever necessary in order to bring out the distinctive contributions made by Kambar and Tulasidas while following or deviating from their sources.

(v) The fifth chapter explains the chief comparative traits of the *characters* of Ramayana.

(vi) The sixth chapter deals with *Literary art and Society* as viewed and expressed by the two poets.

(vii) The seventh and concluding chapter embodies the views of certain eminent scholars about the two classics and *their respective places* in the world of literature.

The translations given here of Kamba Ramayanam are from 'Kamba Ramayanam—A Study' by V.V.S. Iyer, and those of Tulasi Ramayan are from 'The Holy Lake of the Acts of Rama' by W. D. P. Hill.

The spellings of proper names are according to the phonetic forms of the languages concerned.

The system of giving references to **Kamba Ramayanam** is as explained below:—

If it is (1.10.35), 1 denotes the number of the Kanda (section). 10 the number of the Padalam (i.e. Sarga or Sub-section) and 35 the number of the stanza according to the 'Kamba Ramaynam' edited and commented upon by V. M. Gopalakrishnamachariar.

In Tulasi Ramayan, if it is (1-56-4), 1 denotes the number of the Kanda, 56 the number of the doha in the Kanda and 4 the number of the chaupaayi immediately preceding the doha according to the 'Ram Charit Manas' edited by Shyam Sundar Das.

Other references follow the general international system.

Index is said to be the 'Map' of the book So, special attention has been paid towards its preparation. It generally follows the pattern as specified in 'Indexes and Indexing' by Robert L. Collison (1969). The nature of the subject and the intensive as well as extensive treatment accorded to it have forced me to confine it to the present form.

The author is deeply indebted to the late lamented doyen of Tamil, Dr. R. P. Sethu Pillai, D.Litt., the First Professor and Head of the Department of Tamil, University of Madras, but for whose valuable guidance and benevolent encouragement, this research work would not have appeared in this form.

I am thankful to Thiru V. Thillainayagam, M.A., M.Lib.Sc., B.T., Librarian, Connemara Public Library, Madras, Dr. S. N. Ganesan, M.A., Ph.D., Lecturer in Hindi, University of Madras and M/S. Manorama Press, Madras, for all their assistance rendered to me towards the publication of this work.

My special gratitude is due to Dr. Sir. A. Lakshmanaswamy Mudaliar, former Vice-Chancellor (1942-69) and the members of the Syndicate, University of Madras, for according permission to get this work published as a University Publication.

I am extremely beholden to the Vice-Chancellor, 'Padma Shri' Uyarthiru N. D. Sundaravadivelu for his appreciation in his 'FOREWORD' to this research work, thereby enhancing the worth of this academic pursuit.

20th December, 1971.
University of Madras, Madras-5.

S. Shankar Raju Naidu,
Professor and Head of the
Department of Hindi.

CONTENTS

Page

CHAPTER VI

LITERARY EXCELLENCE AND SOCIOLOGICAL CONCEPTS

CHAPTER VII

A COMPARATIVE STUDY
OF
KAMBA RAMAYANAM AND TULASI RAMAYAN

A COMPARATIVE STUDY
OF
KAMBA RAMAYANAM AND TULASI RAMAYAN

——:x:——

CHAPTER–I

RAMAYANA — ITS DIFFERENT VERSIONS

Ramayana has had the greatest appeal among the peoples of India from time immemorial. It has given rise to the best of literatures in all the regional languages of India. Every writer has given a shape to the story in his own individual way so as to fit-in with the culture and traditions of his home land. Ramayana had this unique appeal because of various reasons, chief among them being the vast scope for expressing the individual human being in a variety of forms and his relationship with all around him. Ramayana describes the everlasting conflict between the Good and the Evil, and shows how the good finally wins over the evil, striking thereby at an ideal social and ethical basis for the humanity at large. It is the mirror reflecting the national mind and the picture differs from author to author, and age to age. Hence, it is 'an object of profound admiration and study' in all parts of India as are Homer's poems with their Helenic culture in Europe. 'A profound master of Greek and Latin and one of the greatest savants of the world' has stated :

> "If I were to look over the whole world to find out the country most richly endowed with all the wealth, power and beauty that nature can bestow in some past, a very

> paradise on earth, I should point to India. If I were asked under what sky the human mind has most fully developed some of its choicest gifts, has most deeply pondered on the greatest problems of life, and has found selections of some of them which well deserved the attention even of those who have studied Plato and Kant, I should point to India. And if I were to ask myself from what literature we, here in Europe, who have been nurtured almost exclusively on the thoughts of Greeks and Romans and of one Semitic race, the Jewish, may draw that corrective which is most wanted in order to make our inner life more perfect, more comprehensive, more universal, in fact more truly human, a life not for this life only; but a transfigured and eternal life — again I should point to India."[1]

This statement is based upon the two great classics of India, viz., Ramayana and Mahabharata.[2] These two great epics embalm in their immortal pages the mighty imagination of their authors and to a very large extent the reflection of the nation as it was in their times. As "Word must always become 'Flesh' in order to get admission to human heart",[3] the authors transformed their emotions and the feelings for their society in the form of magnificent epics which have been encouraging and ennobling the mankind. Mahabharata contains the story of Ramayana in four places the chief one being 'Ramopakhyana',[4] an epitome of Ramayana related by Markandeya to Yudhishthira. It also contains about fifty references to the story of Ramayana and its characters. In the 'Aranya Parva', Rama is depicted as an incarnation.[5] It also makes mention of the important places occurring in Ramayana as Sacred, for example Sringaverpur[6] and Gopratar.[7] Hence it is generally accepted that Ramayana is anterior to Mahabharata.

Ramayana is supposed to be the 'Adi Kavya' in Sanskrit and Maharshi Valmiki, its composer, the 'Adi Kavi'. It is called as 'Chaturvimshati Sahasri', that is to say it contains twenty-four

1. 'The Ramayan' — Introduction, Makhan Lal Sen, p. ii.
2. This contains the 'Bhagawat Gita' which is supposed to have come out straight from the mouth of Lord Krishna 'the Bhagawan' Himself, and contains the Cream of Hindu Philosophy.
3. 'The Ramayana'—Introduction, Makhan Lal Sen, p. iv.
4. Mahabharata — Vana Parva — Chapters 273 to 293.
5. 'Goswami Tulasidas aur Ram Katha' — Satyadev Chaturvedi, p. 71.
6. Mahabharata — 'Vanaparva', (3-85-65).
7. *Ibid.*, (3-85-70).

thousand couplets — as many as there are letters in the 'Gayatri Mantram'—the Celestial Sanskrit prayer. About this Poet, the Encyclopædia Americana says as follows:

> "Valmiki, the author, had been a high-way man in the early life, but became a Saint through repeating Rama's name. It is said that, moved at the death of a male dove killed by a hunter's arrow while sporting with its mate, Valmiki uttered an exclamation,[8] where upon a voice from heaven declared that he had unwittingly created the shloka metre, and bade him write in that metre of the life and deeds of Rama...... It is not an allegory, but is based on various legends about Rama current at the time of its writing."[9]

Valmika literally means 'an ant hill'. The story is that once Sapta Rishis (or according to Krittivas Bengali Ramayana, Brahma and Narada) were attacked by a robber named Ratnakar. They apparently yielded to him and asked him as to whether his wife would be prepared to share the consequences of his sinful deeds as in the case of virtuous ones. The robber, disturbed in mind, tied the seven Rishis to a tree, went straight to his wife and put the above question. She frankly replied, "I am to share your good deeds only and not the sins you commit". This reply brought a change in him. He went to the Rishis, released them and prayed to them to show him the path of righteousness. The Rishis asked him to repeat the name 'Rama' which he could not do due to the abundance of sins that he had already accumulated. Then they asked him to say the reverse of the name, namely 'Mara' which by constant repetition became 'Rama'. Valmiki forgot himself for years together, so much so that his body was completely eaten away by white ants, and there grew over him a big ant-hill. But even then he went on repeating the name 'Rama'. After thousand yugas, the Sapta Rishis came back and asked him to come out. He came out in a new form and was thereafter called Valmiki. Hence the change-over of the name from Ratnakar to Valmiki.[10] It was then that he came across the dove incident bringing out from him the spontaneous overflow of *pathos* in the shloka which is supposed to have offered him the miraculous

8. Valmiki Ramayana — Bala Kanda. (1 — 4).

9. 'The Encyclopædia Americana' — Vol. 23, p. 200 (contributed by Swami Nikhilananda).

10. Earliest reference of this story is found in Mahabharata (Anushasana Parva) and is related in Adhyatma Ramayana also (2-6-64 to 86).

basis for the composition of the epic 'Ramayana' with Rama as the hero.

The seeds for the story of Ramayana are found in Rig Veda itself; which is considered by Sanskritists as the most ancient work available in the world, its date ranging between 750 B.C. to 1000 B.C. according to various occidental and oriental scholars. Dasharatha[11] and Rama[12] each appear once as king in Rig Veda, and Janaka once in 'Taitireeya Brahmana' and four times in 'Shatpatha Brahmana'. Sita who is the central figure of the Ramayana, is referred to in Rig Veda in several places as the chief deity of cultivation,[13] and in 'Taittireeya Brahmana' as the daughter of Brahma.[14] 'Sita' literally means 'the line formed by ploughing the earth', and hence she is supposed to be the daughter of mother-earth in the Valmiki Ramayana, and in 'Vishnu Purana' too. Besides the above references, no specific clue for the plot of Ramayana is to be found in the Vedas. Some scholars, however, feel that Rama and Ravana represent Indra and Vritrasura of Rig Veda; the former's cows were stolen and concealed in a cave by the latter and were later brought back.[15]

While, on one side, Valmiki is supposed to be a contemporary of Rama himself, and as the 'Adi-Kavi' being the originator of Ramayana, it is also believed that he was the son of one Chyavanamuni, the son of Bhrigu Rishi,[16] and that Chyavana had already composed one 'Rama-Charita'.[17] Valmiki's Ramayana being more colourful and magnificent, stood the test of time, but the other one could not influence the people.[18] It may, however, be understood that Valmiki collected all the stories prevalent during his time and brought forth his monumental work in the Shloka metre.[19] Unlike Mahabharata, Valmiki Ramayana is the work of

11. Rig Veda (1-126-4).
12. *Ibid.*, (10-93-14).
13. *Ibid.*, (4-57. 6, 7, etc.).
14. Taittireeya Brahmana (2-3-10).
15. 'Goswami Tulasidas aur Ram Katha'—Satyadev Chaturvedi, p. 21.
16. Mahabharata (6-122-1).
17. Ram-Katha—Rev. Fr. Dr. Kamil Bulkey, p. 136.
18. 'Goswami Tulasidas aur Ram Katha'—Satyadev Chaturvedi, p. 22.
19. "The story of Rama is as old as our motherland. We cannot say when or where it has its origin. It is not the simple and original composition of one poet, Valmiki. This great sage tells us that it was Narada who first narrated the story to him. So, it belongs to that type of ancient story

a single poet, as it clearly reveals marked unity of conception and style. Chamber's Encyclopædia gives the following note on Ramayana:

> "The poet has combined the different legends into a single theme; the first is a tale of court intrigue showing how Dasharatha, King of Ayodhya, is forced in order to keep a rash promise to Kaikeyi, his second wife, to disinherit the eldest son Rama in favour of Bharata, her child and how Rama goes into exile in the forest,[20] accompanied by his true wife Sita, and his youngest brother Lakshmana. The second tells of the rape of Sita by a demon, Ravana, Lord of Lanka—later identified with Ceylon, but originally quite distinct and her rescue and the slaying of Ravana by Rama who is aided by a host of monkeys under Hanumat and Sugriva. Here we are in the region of myth brought down to earth; in the late Vedic Literature, Sita is the goddess of ploughed field, and Rama's over-throw of Ravana with Hanumat's aid is a reflex of Indra's victory over Vritra, demon of draught, with the aid of wind gods, for Hanumat is the son of the Wind god....Rama is identified with Vishnu as the supreme deity."[21]

Ramdhari Singh 'Dinkar', the famous Hindi Poet and critic, is of the opinion that there ought to have been three different stories which were aptly brought together by Valmiki, and that Ayodhya, Kishkindha and Lanka with Rama, Hanuman and Ravana as the heroes, would have been the respective place of action representing three different cultures. He also feels that the name 'Hanuman' could have come from '*Aan Mandi*', a Dravidian word, which literally means 'male monkey', and that the people of Kishkindha had either a complexion resembling the monkey or had the sign of a monkey over their flags.[22]

which forms the basis of authentic epic or epic of growth. It must have existed as 'epic material' long long prior to Valmiki's days, and was, perhaps, fragmentary, scattered, loosely related, sometimes contradictory, each piece of comparatively small size, with no intention beyond hearty narrative. It was a national heritage, and genius of Valmiki converted it into an epic."—'Kamban Kaviyam'—Prof. S. Vaiyapuri Pillai, p. 152.

20. The Encyclopædia Americana—Vol. 23, p. 199. "Rama, Sixth incarnation of Vishnu...........As old age approached, the King (Dasharatha) wished to install Rama as heir apparent but was frustrated by his wily second wife, who, recalling a past promise of the king, succeeded in making her own son heir apparent and exiling Rama for fourteen years........"

21. Chamber's Encyclopædia—Vol. XI, p. 512.

22. 'Sanskriti ke Char Adhyaya'—Ramdhari Singh 'Dinkar', p. 68.

It may however be accepted that the Ramayana of Valmiki came to the present form by combining into it various stories prevalent at the time of the author, and also that it was Valmiki who gave it the present shape.

The date of Ramayana is one of the greatest of problems. Scholars, oriental and occidental, differ among themselves very widely. On an examination of the views of Dr. Jacobi, A. B. Keith is led to the following conclusion after a careful study of twenty years — "On the whole, therefore, it seems to me that while the date before 500 B.C. cannot well be maintained, there is no reason to go below a date before 300 B.C. for the kernel of the Ramayana".[23] But Sen Gupta fixes the date as 438 A.D. after analysing the historical, astrological, astronomical and other scientific references contained in the epic. He states in his paper on 'Date of Composition of the Ramayana' as follows :

> "It seems almost certain that the date of 'Composition of the Ramayana (i.e., the Ramayana in its present form) is approximately 438 A.D. The other evidences quoted above also seem to indicate that our poet belonged to the time which preceded the time of Aryabhata.......Politically this period synchronises with the brilliant Gupta Age of Indian History".[24]

Various scholars have considered the following dates as the probable ones : —

Dr. Jacobi	..	Between Sixth and Eighth Century B.C.
H. Jacobi	..	First or Second Century B.C.
M. Winternitz	..	Third Century B.C.
C. V. Vaidya	..	First Century B.C.
A. Weber	..	Third or Fourth Century A.D.
A. A. Macdonell	..	About the Seventh Century B.C.
A. B. Keith	..	A little before Third Century B.C.

On the whole, it is generally believed to be near about the third century B.C.,[25] particularly because the chief characters of Ramayana, viz., Rama, Sita, Dasharatha, etc., are not found in

23. Keith, A. B. — 'The Date of Ramayana' — Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of London, 1915.

24. 'Date of Composition of the Ramayana' — Journal of the Department of Letters, (Calcutta University), Vol. XIX, No. 3.

25. Indian Literature — Vol. I (Published by the University of Calcutta, Calcutta 1927) p. 516-517.

Panini,[26] the famous Sanskrit grammarian, whose period is considered to be near about the fourth century B.C.

The Text

There are three versions of Valmiki Ramayana. The differences in the text are but natural, because, originally the epic came down from generation to generation through the word of mouth. The three versions are—(i) Southern, (ii) Gaudeeya and (iii) North-western Recensions. The number of Sargas as available today in the three recensions is respectively as follows:—

	Southern Recension Sargas	Gaudeeya Recension Sargas	North-Western Recension Sargas
Bala Kanda ..	77	80	77
Ayodhya Kanda ..	113	127	119
Aranya Kanda ..	80	79	79
Kishkindha Kanda ..	64	67	69
Sundara Kanda ..	68	95	68
Lanka Kanda ..	130	113	130
Uttara Kanda ..	111	115	124
Total ..	643	676	666

It is generally supposed that only the middle five kandas were originally written by Valmiki, and that the first and seventh kandas are later interpolations made probably during the first and third century A.D. respectively.[27] On careful reading, however, the first kanda appears to have undergone considerable changes, but cannot be assumed to be an interpolation, for, giving as it does, a description of the birth and marriage of the hero and heroine with causes for the same, it is a necessary introduction to the

26. 'Ram Katha'—Dr. Kamil Bulkey, pp. 36, 37.
27. *Ibid.*, pp. 112, 113 and 489.

Ayodhya Kanda. However, the seventh kanda, i.e., the Uttara Kanda, does appear to be an interpolation, because—

(i) The story has a natural end at the close of the sixth kanda, thereby offering the epic a happy ending '*Sukhanta.*' The ending also is mentioned in the text itself.[28]

(ii) The index given in the very first sarga of the first kanda, i.e., 'Bala Kanda', contains no reference to the 'Uttara Kanda'. However, other indices appear to have been added on later giving a place to the seventh kanda also.

(iii) Very little differences are found in the Uttara Kanda of the three recensions.

(iv) It is specifically mentioned in the fourth sarga of Bala Kanda[29] that there are twenty-four thousand stanzas and five hundred sargas in the epic. These numbers of shlokas and sargas are made up by the first six kandas, thereby proving that the Uttara Kanda is a later addition.

Main Plot

The main plot of the story of Ramayana as found in the Valmiki is, in short, as follows:—

There was a king named Dasharatha in Ayodhya. He had three wives, Kaushalya, Kaikeyi and Sumitra, but no issues. He got the 'Putra Kameshti Yagya' performed by his preceptors for begetting children and consequently got four sons, viz., Rama by Kaushalya, Bharata by Kaikeyi, and Lakshmana and Shatrughna by Sumitra. When Rama was a boy, an ascetic, Vishwamitra by name, came to Dasharatha's court and requested that Rama be sent for help in the successful performance of his *yagya.* Dasharatha acceded to this request and sent Rama and Lakshmana with him. These two princes killed the demoness Tataka and her son Subahu, and drove away Mareecha, who were causing hindrances to the fulfilment of the yagya. They then came to Mithila where Janaka was ruling. On the way Rama gave salvation to Ahalya who had been cursed by her husband Gautama Rishi. At Mithila, Rama broke the Shiva's bow, thereby qualifying himself according to the proclamation of Janaka, and married his daughter Sita. The

28. Valmiki Ramayana (6-128-117).
29. *Ibid.,* (1-4-8).

other three brothers also were married to the three sisters of Sita. Sita is supposed to have come out directly from Mother Earth, when the king was once ploughing the field. After the marriage, Parashurama came there, picked up a quarrel with Rama, got defeated and left for the forest for penance. Bharata and Shatrughna went to the home of Kaikeyi's father with their newly wedded wives. This is Bala Kanda.

On account of his old age, Dasharatha decided to crown Rama and all the courtiers agreed. When the arrangements for coronation were being made, one Manthara, an old servant-maid of Kaikeyi, who did not like Rama, wanted to stop his coronation. So she went to Kaikeyi and induced her to get Bharata crowned instead. To this end, she wanted Kaikeyi to demand of the king the two boons promised to her earlier. She accordingly forced the king to agree to crown Bharata by one boon and by the other to banish Rama to the forest for fourteen years. As one adhering to truth, the king could not refuse to grant the boons, and, as a result, Rama went to the forest with Sita and Lakshmana. Pained at Rama's separation, Dasharatha died, in accordance with the curse of the blind parents of Shravana Kumar. Bharata who was sent for by Vashishtha came to Ayodhya and learnt, to his extreme grief, all that had happened. As a dutiful younger brother, he went straight to Rama who was then at Chitrakoota, and requested him to return and be crowned king. This was in vain. He therefore returned with the Sandals of Rama and ran the government, seating the sandals on the throne and himself living the life of an ascetic. This is Ayodhya Kanda.

Rama left Chitrakoota, and went to and settled at Panchavati near the source of the river Godavari. Ravana's sister, Shoorpanakha who was in the vicinity, fell in love with Rama and approached him with a request to marry her. Rama turned her to Lakshmana stating that the latter was single. Lakshmana sent her back to Rama stating that he was only Rama's slave. Shoorpanakha thought that Sita was an impediment to her marriage with Rama and tried to carry her away by force. Under a direction from Rama, Lakshmana cut her nose and ears and drove her off. She ran to her brother Khara and represented what had happened. He with his army under Dooshana fought with Rama, and the latter killed them all single-handed. Shoorpanakha ran to Lanka and reported to Ravana about her disfigurement by Rama and Lakshmana, adding that the former's wife Sita who was extremely

charming, would be a fitting wife to him. Ravana sought the aid of Mareecha to help him to carry her away. Mareecha took the form of a golden deer and strayed before the cottage attracting Sita's attention. She wanted Rama to get the deer for her to play with and Rama chased the deer. Finding that it could not be caught, he shot an arrow and the false deer fell down crying 'Sita', 'Lakshmana'. On hearing this, Sita entreated Lakshmana to go and save Rama. Accordingly when he left the cottage, Ravana who was waiting in the vicinity, carried away Sita to Lanka. On the way Jatayu, the vulture king, came to rescue Sita. There was a fight which ended in the clipping of a wing of Jatayu who fell down fainting. Ravana proceeded to Lanka. On seeing some monkeys on the way, Sita dropped down her ornaments by their side. On reaching Lanka, Ravana kept her in the Ashoka Garden. When Rama and Lakshmana returned, the cottage was empty and Sita was not to be found. They began searching for her. They found the dying Jatayu who narrated what had happened, and breathed his last. After performing the obsequies to the dead Jatayu, Rama and Lakshmana proceeded towards the south in search of Sita. There they encountered the demon named Kabandha and killed him. He resumed his original celestial form, adored Rama, informed that Shabari was waiting for him, and suggested that they might befriend Sugriva at Rishyamooka. Rama took up the suggestion of Kabandha, visited Shabari at her hermitage and taking the path suggested by her, reached near Rishyamooka mountain. This is Aranya Kanda.

Sugriva who was driven away by his elder brother Vali from the kingdom of Kishkindha, was living in the Rishyamooka mountain, a forbidden place to Vali due to a curse. When Rama and Lakshmana were approaching, Sugriva, suspecting them to be Vali's men, asked his minister Hanuman to go and find out who they were. Hanuman, assuming the form of a beggar, went to Rama. He heard from Rama the sad story of Sita's abduction and their search for her, and in turn narrated Sugriva's sad tale and took them to him. Rama and Sugriva became friends. Rama assured Sugriva to get back his wife and kingdom, and proved his valour by throwing away the huge corpse of Dundubhi and by piercing through the seven *sala* trees with one arrow. Encouraged by the might of Rama, Sugriva picked up a quarrel with Vali. Sugriva and Vali came to blows and Rama, hiding behind a tree, killed Vali by a sharp shaft. When asked by Vali, Rama justified his action by saying that he (Vali) was cruel to his brother

and misappropriated his wife, which was highly improper. Though not satisfied with this explanation at first, he later reconciled himself to his lot and begged Rama to excuse him. He entrusted his wife Tara and his son Angada to his care and died. Sugriva was then crowned as king of Kishkindha and was told to meet Rama with his army after the rainy season was over. Sugriva did not come as promised, being immersed in worldly pleasures. Rama grew angry and sent Lakshmana to find out the cause of delay. When Lakshmana went to Kishkindha, Tara, at the instance of Sugriva, appeased Lakshmana and told that Sugriva had already taken necessary action. Lakshmana took Sugriva to Rama. Search for Sita was taken up in right earnest and search parties were sent in all the four directions. Hanuman, with Jambavan and others, under the command of Angada, was deputed to the South. Rama gave special instructions to Hanuman and gave him his signet ring. He, with his party, came to know that Sita was in Lanka, and reached the southern sea-shore after getting some clue from Sampati, the brother of Jatayu. All thought that Hanuman was the only person fit to cross the ocean to reach Lanka. Hanuman, encouraged by Jambavan, accepted this task and got ready to take a great leap over the sea from the Mahendra mountain. This is Kishkindha Kanda.

Hanuman took a long leap and reached Lanka crossing the ocean between. There, after a long search, he found Sita under a tree in the Ashoka Garden. She was there in a piteous condition, surrounded by demonesses, her only consolation being that there was also the old and good-natured Trijata. Finding no way of escape from the bondage, Sita was pondering over her lot, when Ravana appeared before her and made improper overtures. Sita scorned at him, and after he left the place, decided to put an end to her life by hanging herself from a tree. When she was about to do so, Hanuman made his appearance, narrated the story of Rama and later gave the ring to Sita. After consoling her and assuring that Rama would take her back shortly, he took leave of her. Sita handed over her *choodamani* as a sign to be given to Rama. Hanuman then destroyed the Ashoka Garden wholesale, and he was caught by the demons and a free fight ensued. News reached Ravana and he sent Akshayakumara, his son, and he was killed by Hanuman. Ravana sent his son Indrajit to bring Hanuman. He tied up Hanuman with 'Brahmastra' and took him to his father, dragging

him along the route. Ravana got Hanuman's long tail wound with cloth, drenched in oil and set fire to it. Hanuman with his blazing tail, set out jumping hither and thither over the palatial buildings and burnt the city to the utter surprise and dismay of Ravana and others. Hanuman took leave of Sita and came back to Rama with his companions. He narrated his finding Sita in a despondent condition in the Ashoka Garden in Lanka and handed over the *Choodamani* relating all that had happened there. This is Sundara Kanda.

With Sugriva and all his forces, Rama marched on to the sea-shore. In Lanka, Ravana's good brother Vibhishana advised him to release Sita, but Ravana was adamant and would not listen. Vibhishana who would not brook this unrighteous conduct of his brother, had to leave Lanka and join Rama on the other side of the ocean. Rama gave him shelter. Then they bridged the ocean by putting hillocks in it, crossed it and entered Lanka. Angada was then sent as a messenger to Ravana to demand of him restoration of Sita on pain of destruction. This was of no avail. War ensued and Ravana's forces died one after the other. But Indrajit shot his *Nagastra* at Rama and Lakshmana, and they fell down unconscious. After a while, Rama regained consciousness. Seeing that Lakshmana's condition was precarious, Rama lamented. At this juncture Garuda flew over the scene and the bonds of the serpents unfastened themselves automatically. The fight was resumed. All the warriors on the side of Ravana died one after another. Then Ravana sent his brother Kumbhakarna for battle. There was a fierce fight, and at the end he was killed by Rama. Indrajit now appeared again, gave tough fight to Rama and Lakshmana and had them bound over with *Brahmastra*. On the advice of Jambavan that life-giving herbs were available in the Himalayas, Hanuman proceeded there and brought the hill itself. Rama and Lakshmana recovered and began the battle afresh. Indrajit was killed by Lakshmana. At last there came the final battle between Rama and Ravana. It was a prolonged and hazardous one, at the end of which Ravana was killed by Rama. Vibhishana was crowned king of Lanka. Sita was informed of the victory and was brought to Rama. On the severe words expressed by Rama, Sita proved her chastity by entering the fire and coming out unscathed. There was all round happiness and all returned to Ayodhya by a *Pushpaka* plane. Hanuman was sent earlier to Bharata, and he informed him of the arrival of Rama. Bharata was overjoyed. Rama arrived and was crowned

king of Ayodhya. The guests left Ayodhya with presents, but Hanuman stayed behind with Rama. This is Yuddha Kanda. Thus the story of the original Ramayana closes with a happy ending.

Uttara Kanda which is not supposed to have been written by Valmiki but interpolated sometime about the third century A.D., gives an account of the story after Rama became king of Ayodhya. Uttara Kanda deals first with the birth and life of Ravana and his brothers and the troubles caused by the Rakshasas to the Devas and Rishis and of the birth and earlier life of Hanuman, Vali and Sugriva. It also relates the washerman's blasphemy about Sita, her exile by Rama and her giving oirth to two sons, Lava and Kusha, at the abode of Valmiki. Then comes the story of the death of the young son of a brahmin caused by a sudra Shambooka performing severe yagya not authorised by Vedas for his caste, which leads Rama to assassinate Shambooka, and the dead brahmin child comes back to life. Rama finally performs the Ashwamedha Yagya which brings Valmiki with Lava and Kusha to his court. Lava and Kusha sing the Ramayana[30] in the presence of Rama, which evokes his admiration. He recognises Lava and Kusha to be his own sons. Sita arrives there with Valmiki and after a discussion, enters into the bosom of the mother-earth, proving her chastity thereby. Lakshmana is banished by Rama as, contrary to his specific orders, he allowed Durvasa to enter his chamber, while he was closeted with *Kala* (God of Death). Lakshmana performs a penance at the river Sarayu and enters heaven. Then Rama proclaims his decision to follow Lakshmana. All the people of Ayodhya including Bharata, Shatrughna, the Rishis and others follow Rama after crowning Lava and Kusha as kings of the two parts of Ayodhya. There is a *Maha Prasthana*, and all go to heaven with Rama.

The work on the whole is a magnificent monument of letters and is a pride of Indian Literature. Monier Williams, acclaiming the epic, states:

> "Notwithstanding the wilderness of exaggeration and hyperbole through which the reader of the Indian Epics has occasionally to wander, there are in the whole range of the World's Literature *few* more charming poems than

30. "This epic contains 24,000 shlokas, 500 Sargas and six kandas, and seventh is Uttarakanda. It is composed by our Guru Rishi Valmiki. This contains the complete story of yours."—So sing Lava and Kusha (7-107).

the Ramayana. The classical purity, clearness and simplicity of its style, the exquisite touches of true poetic feeling with which it abounds, its graphic description of heroic incidents and nature's grandest scenes, the deep acquaintance it displays with the conflicting working and most refined emotions of the human heart, all entitle it to rank among the most beautiful compositions that have appeared at any period or in any country. It is like a spacious and delightful garden, here and there allowed to run wild, but teeming with fruits and flowers, watered by perennial streams, and even its most tangled thickets intersected with delightful pathways".[31]

It is interesting to note that when scholars of Ramayana generally approve of the birth and development of the characters and story of Ramayana as purely Indian, a few like A. Weber and Telang feel that this epic has its roots in Greece and Homer's Iliad. Weber states :

"In the existing condition of the text, however, we find unmistakable indications that the influence of Greece upon India was already firmly established .... We should recognise the influence of an acquaintance with the Homeric Saga-Cycle."[32]

K. T. Telang writing on the composition of Valmiki, supports the theory that Valmiki derived the matter of his epic from the Iliad of Homer.[33] But Lilie Aurther is of the view that Homer had his sources for his twin epics from India.[34]

While Ramayana of Valmiki got its present form by the exquisite literary compilation of the then prevalent stories and tales woven around Rama, Sita, Hanuman, Ravana and the other characters, it has also established itself as an ever-flowing reservoir for more Ramayanas, long and short, in part or whole, coming out of it. While it has proved to be the epic of the people and scholars alike and as one nearest and dearest to their heart, it has also given ample scope for the birth and growth of scores and hundreds of its very self in various styles. In the literature

31. 'Indian Wisdom'—Monier Williams, M., p. 363 (4th Edition, London, 1893).

32. 'The Ramayana'—A. Weber, p. 110 (Translated from German by the Rev. D. C. Boyd, M.A.).

33. Indian Antiquary, Bombay (1872), pp. 143-147.

34. 'Rama and Homer'—Lilic Aurthur, London, 1912. The subtitle of the book is "An argument that in the Indian Epics Homer found the theme of his two great poems."

of the world, we cannot find any other epic which has given rise to so many versions, each coloured in its own unique and magnificent manner but with the same matter, without yielding place to its indigenous character. Ramayana is like a sun with countless vibgyoric colours, ever inventing flowers of extraordinary types, which again give room for bringing out garlands of these very flowers in apt permutations and combinations fitting in with the cultural and civic climates of the people who wear them on their emotional and mental bodies, thanks to the genius of Valmiki the creator of such a sun with the gaseous and glittering material that was available to him in the form of folk tales and stories preserved orally from generation to generation. We shall now observe the deviations from Valmiki in the different versions of Ramayana.

Mahabharata

Mahabharata which is supposed to be the complement of Ramayana in Indian Literature, has the story of Rama in four places and minor references in about fifty places. 'Ramopakhyana',[35] the story of Ramayana related by Markandeya to Dharmaraja Yudhishthira, is the most elaborate and important. The salient features of Ramopakhyana are :

(i) No Putreshti Yagya is performed for the birth of Dasharatha's sons.

(ii) Sita is the natural daughter of Janaka.

(iii) No mention of Ghua and Atri Rishi is made.

(iv) Kaikeyi has the right for only one boon.

(v) No reference to Viradha, Agastya, Ayomukhi and Shabari is found.

(vi) Sugriva fights with Vali only once for Rama to shoot at Vali.

(vii) Lakshmana kills Kumbhakarna.

(viii) Hanuman is not stated to have brought any mount of herb from the Himalayas.

(ix) Lakshmana is not hit by any *Shakti* of Indrajit.

(x) Sita does not enter fire in proof of her chastity.

35. Based upon 'Mahabharat Ki Katha' — 'Ram Katha' by Dr. Kamil Bulkey, pp. 43-51.

(xi) Ramopakhyana closes with the crowning of Rama. The washerman incident is not brought in here though it is in Shanti Parva.[36] Exile of Sita after the coronation of Rama, is not touched upon, thereby having a happy ending.

While Dr. Sukthankar believes that Ramopakhyana should have emanated from Valmiki Ramayana, Dr. Hopkins and A. Ludwig are of the opinion that this must have been composed independently of Valmiki Ramayana. Dr. Jacobi's view is that it must have been composed by one who had heard of the earlier form of Ramayana, and this view is generally accepted by several scholars.

One special feature in Mahabharata is that Rama is taken as an incarnation and has been clearly mentioned as such in Aranya, Shanti and Swargarohana Parvas.[37]

Jataka Versions

The most important story prior to Valmiki Ramayana appears to be the 'Dasharatha Jataka'[38] found in the 'Jatakattha Vannana' i.e., 'stories of the Buddha's Former Births'. Dr. Weber is of the opinion that in this Dasharatha Jataka lies the very origin of the Ramayana story and dates it back to the fifth century B.C., taking into consideration the Teekas of Dhammapad and Suttanipat as sources for Dasharatha Jataka.[39]. Dr. Dinesh Chandra Sen also agrees with the view of Dr. Weber in accepting Dasharatha Jataka as the root-story for Ramayana. Wheeler J.T., however, feels that the conflict between the Buddhists and the Brahmins gave rise to the Ramayana, identifying Rakshasas with Buddhists, specially because a direct reference is made about Buddha as a thief and an atheist in the Ayodhya Kanda.[40] But generally scholars are not in agreement with his view.

There are three Jataka stories connected with Ramayana, viz., Dasharatha Jataka, Anamakam Jatakam and Dasharatha

36. Mahabharata — Shanti Parva (12-152).
37. Ibid., (3-147, 260, 299); (12-348); (18-6).
38. 'The Jataka' Ed. Prof. E. B. Cowell, Vol. IV. Translated from Pali by W. H. D. Rouse, M.A., (Cambridge — at the University Press — 1901), pp. 78-82.
39. 'Ram Katha' — Dr. Kamil Bulkey, pp. 83-87.
40. Valmiki Ramayana (2-109-34).

Kathanam, among which Dasharatha Jataka is of predominant importance. The story of Dasharatha Jataka is as follows:

Dasharatha Jataka

Dasharatha, the good king of Banaras, had two sons, Rama Pandita or Rama the wise and Lakkhana or Lucky, and a daughter Sita from his queen-consort and eldest of the Sixteen thousand wives. When the queen-consort died, he married another in her place and she bore him a son named Bharata. The king loved this queen-consort very dearly and promised her a boon. She reserved it for an opportune moment, and asked for the same when Bharata reached seven years of age demanding the kingdom for him. The king did not grant this request but the queen persisted. Finally, he sent for his other two sons and asked them to 'go to some neighbouring kingdom or to a woodland' and return after his death. Then he summoned the soothsayers and understood from them that he was to live only for twelve more years. He therefore bade his two sons to return after twelve years and 'uplift the umbrella of royalty'. The dutiful sons did what the father wanted of them, and left the palace weeping. Sita also bade farewell to her father and joined Rama Pandita, her brother. The three went to the Himalayas and stayed there in a hut feeding upon wild fruits. King Dasharatha died in the ninth year itself. When the queen-consort gave orders to crown her son Bharata as king, the courtiers did not allow it to happen. Prince Bharata also, as a righteous brother, agreed with the courtiers and went to the forest to bring back the true heir. When Bharata approached Rama and told all that had happened, he 'neither sorrowed nor wept; emotion in his mind was none'. Bharata felt astonished at Rama and asked:

"Say by what power Thou grievest not, Rama, when grief should be?
Though it is said thy Sire is dead, grief overwhelms not thee!"

In answer, Rama Pandita said:

"When man can never keep a thing, though loudly he may cry,
Why should a wise intelligence torment itself thereby?

"The young in years, the older grown, the fool, and eke the wise,
For rich, for poor one, end is sure; each man among them dies.

"As sure as for the ripened fruit there comes the fear of fall,
So surely comes the fear of death to mortals one and all.

"Who in the morning light are seen by evening oft are gone,
And seen at evening time, is gone, by morning many a one.

* * * * *

"By this tormenting of himself he waxes thin and pale;
This cannot bring the dead to life, and nothing tears avail."

and thus explained the impermanence of things. Hearing the words of Rama, all lost their grief. Then Bharata requested Rama to accept the kingdom of Banaras, but Rama did not approve of the request, stating that his father had commanded him to return to the kingdom only after twelve years, and added that should he return when Bharata wanted, he would not be carrying out the bidding of his father. Then Rama gave his 'slippers' made of straw *Tin-paduka* to Bharata and asked him to return with Lakkhana and Sita and run the kingdom with those slippers. The words of Rama were followed. The straw slippers were placed on the throne. They guided the courtiers in their administration by the beating of each other whenever a wrong was committed.

After three years, Rama returned and was crowned. Sita, his sister, was married to Rama and she became the queen-consort. For over sixeteen thousand years he reigned and then went to heaven.

This story is said to have been related by Buddha who has explained at the end the allegorical significance of the same as under:

"At that time king Suddhodana (Father of Buddha) was king Dasaratha, Mahamaya (Mother of Buddha) was the mother, Rahula's mother (Buddha's wife Yashodhara) was Sita, Ananda (Chief deciple of Buddha) was Bharata and I myself was Rama-pandita."[41]

It is to be noted that Ravana's part is conspicuously absent in Dasharatha Jataka. But the most astonishing feature is the rela-

41. The quotations are from No. 461 of Vol. IV of 'The Jataka' Ed. by Prof. E. B. Cowell and Translated by W. H. D. Rouse, M.A. (Cambridge — at the University Press, 1901).

tionship between Rama and Sita, and the brother marrying the sister. This is in accordance with the custom in the Shakya family of Buddha. It may however be felt that, after the master-epic of Valmiki, no one could have thought of portraying Sita as a sister of Rama getting them both married.

Anamakam Jatakam

Anamakam Jatakam has a different version. No name of any of the characters is given in the story, but the story as such has a bearing on Ramayana. This is also related by Buddha as an allegory. The story is as follows: -

Bodhisattva and his maternal uncle were kings of neighbouring countries. As the latter, due to avarice, wanted to attack the former, he left his kingdom with his wife to live in a forest. A serpent of the ocean, appearing in the guise of a rishi, stole away the queen in his absence; a huge vulture attacked the disguised rishi and got its right wing mercilessly cut. The serpent returned to its island. Bodhisattva went in search of her and came across a big monkey whose kingdom had been seized by its uncle. Bodhisattva aimed his sharp shaft at the monkey's uncle and, dreading the same, the uncle took to his heels leaving the kingdom. The monkey got back the kingdom and ordered his forces to search for the lost queen. The vulture informed the searching party of the details of the abduction. Then God Indra took the form of a small monkey and had a bridge constructed with mountains brought by the monkeys. The ocean was thus crossed, and there was a fight in the island. The serpent fought using its magical powers, but when he appeared in the form of a lightning, the small monkey (Indra) told king Bodhisattva that the lightning was itself the serpent, and he killed it with a shaft. The queen was brought back by the small monkey. By then the maternal uncle of Bodhisattva was dead. Bodhisattva returned to his kingdom and resumed his kingship. He told the queen that the people doubted her chastity as she had lived in a stranger's house. The queen assured him that though she had to live in the cave of a brute, she was absolutely chaste, and in proof thereof she wanted the earth to break open, which it did. Then all lived happily.

Buddha, it is stated, told his disciples at the end that he himself was the king, his wife the queen, Devadatta the maternal uncle, and Maitreya the small monkey 'Indra'.

In this story, it is not due to the interference of the step-mother that the king goes to the forest, and the uncle of the monkey

(Vali) is not killed, but he runs away due to fear. This change in the Buddha Jataka is but natural.[42]

The third Jataka story 'Dasharatha Kathanam' is of minor importance, for it does not mention Sita. The story is as given below:

Dasharatha had four queens and each bore him a son—Rama, Ramana (Lomana—Lakshmana), Bharata and Shatrughna. Rama had the magical *Narayaneeya* power. The third queen who was dearest to the king, asked for the fulfilment of a boon granted to her earlier, by the coronation of her son. Dasharatha could not refuse this. Rama and Ramana were sent to the forest for twelve years and Bharata who returned home, found his father dead. He condemned his mother and went to the forest with his retinue to bring back Rama but returned only with his leather sandals. Rama came back after the said period of twelve years and was crowned.[43]

These three Jataka stories offer ample proof to show that the story of Rama was prevalent right from the time of Buddha and was well utilised to depict the traits of Buddhism.

Jaina Versions

From the pre-christian period, Ramayana had been attracting the attention of all people irrespective of race, creed or religion and all, specially in India and generally in the far East, have been taking to this story in their own way to depict the traits of their respective faiths, whims and fancies. Thus Jainism also has given shape to the story of Ramayana, making adjustments in accordance with its philosophy. We find two major versions of Jaina Ramayana, one being 'Pauma Chariya' (i.e., 'Padma Charita' as translated in Sanskrit) by Vimala Suri, a Shvetambar Jain, and the other 'Uttara Purana' by Gunabhadra, a Digambar Jain. In Jaina Ramayanas Rama, Lakshmana and even Ravana are followers of Jainism, and have also risen to the height of being accepted as three of their sixty three saints. A distinguishing feature of Jaina Ramayanas is that the monkeys and Rakshasas belonged to the Vidyadhara clan who were also learned men with magical powers to fly and change forms. The Vidyadharas belong-

42. Based upon 'Ram Katha'—Dr. Kamil Bulkey, pp. 55-57.
43. *Ibid.*, pp. 57-58.

ing to the Vanara or monkey clan, adopted the emblem of monkey on their flags, house tops and palaces. However, it is generally accepted that the Jaina Ramayanas came into existence long after Valmiki Ramayana, probably 'Pauma Chariya' in the third or fourth century A.D.,[44] and 'Uttara Purana' in 898 A.D.[45]

Pauma Chariya

The important deviations in the story of Pauma Chariya are:

(i) Ravana had only one head, but due to the ten reflexions in the garland of diamonds worn by him and noticed by his father when he looked at him for the first time, he was addressed as 'Dasa-greeva' i.e., 'Oh Ten Headed', and hence the conception of Ravana having ten heads.

(ii) Indra, Yama, Varuna etc., are not gods but only human beings as kings.

(iii) Vali, again a man as king, relinquishes his kingdom in favour of his brother Sugriva and takes to Jainism.

(iv) Hanuman marries Ananga Kusuma, the daughter of Ravana's sister Chandranakha.

(v) Khara is not Ravana's brother but his sister Chandranakha's husband and has a son Shambooka.

(vi) Dasharatha had four wives, and Satrughna is the son of Suprabha, the fourth one.

(vii) Ravana, knowing from Narada that his death is to be due to the daughter of Janaka and by the son of Dasharatha, sends Vibhishana to bring the heads of both Dasharatha and Janaka. They run away when Vibhishana arrives, placing their effigies in their respective palaces. Vibhishana severs the heads of the effigies and throws them into the ocean.

(viii) Rama, after exile with Sita and Lakshmana, marries three other women, and Lakshmana eleven.

(ix) Shambooka is beheaded by Lakshmana unknowingly while cutting bamboos, and consequently his mother Chandra-

44. According to the Jaina tradition and also Dr. Winterneitz, Dr. Loyanian etc., the date of composition is supposed to be 3 A.D. (i.e., Vira Nirvana Year 530).

45. Dr. Harmaun Jacobi takes it to be a work of about the 4th or 5th century A.D., whereas Dr. Keith and Dr. Bulner fix it at 3rd century A.D. and after. (See p. 276 of 'Jaina Sahitya aur Itihas' by Nathuram Premi).

nakha comes lamenting to Rama but later requests him to marry her.

(x) Lakshmana alone fights with Khara-Dooshana.

(xi) Mareecha has no part in the plot and instead Ravana himself utters the 'Lion's Roar', hearing which Rama goes to Lakshmana who was already in the forest, and Ravana carries away Sita.

(xii) It is one Sahasagati who relieves Sugriva of his wife and kingdom. Rama gets them back to Sugriva by killing Sahasagati. Rama marries the thirteen daughters of Sugriva.

(xiii) Hanuman is a good friend of Ravana and marries the daughter, Lanka Sundari, of one Vajra Mukhi.

(xiv) Lakshmana marries the daughter of Samudra and also Vishalya, the daughter of one Dronamegha, after the attack of Indrajit with the Shakti weapon.

(xv) Lakshmana (the Narayana) kills Ravana (the Prati-Narayana).

(xvi) On the whole Rama has 8000 wives and Lakshmana 16,000 after return to Ayodhya.

(xvii) Sita after her banishment gives birth to two sons who finally meet their father Rama, but she takes to Jainism and reaches heaven.

(xviii) Lakshmana after death goes to hell, Rama after penance goes to heaven and Ravana after many births becomes an 'Arhat', a super-saint in Jainism.

Uttara Purana

Uttara Purana contains a different version of Ramayana. The chief deviations are:

(i) Rama is the son of Subala, Lakshmana of Kaikeyi, and Bharata and Shatrughna of some other queen whose name is not stated.

(ii) Ravana, the son of Pulastya, disturbs one Manimati, the daughter of Amitvega, who vows that she will be born as his daughter and kill him for his improper action. Thus Sita is born to Mandodari and Ravana. Knowing this from his astrologers, Ravana orders Mareecha to carry her away and leave her in a distant lonely place. Mareecha puts her in a *Manjoosha* which he throws into a ditch in Mithila, and is accidentally found by Janaka while ploughing.

(iii) Janaka invites Rama and Lakshmana to help him in his sacrificial yagya and, after its satisfactory completion, Sita is married to Rama. Thereafter Rama marries seven others and Lakshmana sixteen. With the consent of Dasharatha, both Rama and Lakshmana live happily with their wives at Varanasi (Banaras).

(iv) Narada describes the exquisite charm of Sita to Ravana. At first, Shoorpanakha comes and tries to win her over to his brother, but in vain. Then comes Mareecha in the form of a golden deer and takes Rama far off, when Ravana in the guise of Rama comes and carries her away.

(v) Ravana does not touch any woman without her consent, lest his power to travel by air should vanish.

(vi) Dasharatha dreams of Ravana's action and informs Rama.

(vii) Lakshmana kills Vali.

(viii) Lakshmana kills Ravana.

(ix) Rama has 8,000 wives.

(x) Lakshmana has 16,000 wives.

(xi) Sita has 8 sons. She is not banished.

(xii) Lakshmana dies due to serious illness and enters hell.

(xiii) Rama embraces Jainism and gets salvation.

(xiv) Sita with several other queens, accepts Jainism and enters heaven.

These Jaina versions have given rise to various other similar Ramayanas, among which the Swayambhoo Ramayana in ancient Hindi and Pampa Ramayana in Kannada are noteworthy.[46]

Thus there are three chief trends of Ramayana based upon Hindu, Buddhist and Jaina traditions. We find different origins of Sita who is the key personality[47] in the development of the story of Ramayana. In the Hindu tradition, she is the foster daughter of Janaka, got from the earth while ploughing; in the Buddhist tradition of 'Dasharatha Jataka', she is the daughter of Dasharatha and sister of Rama and marries her own brother according to the then prevalent custom in their family; in the Jaina tradition, in

46. Based upon (a) 'Ram Katha'—Dr. Bulkey, pp. 60 to 71; (b) 'Manas Ki Ram Katha'—Parashuram Chaturvedi, pp. 79 to 85; (c) 'Jaina Sahitya aur Itihas'—Nathuram Premi, pp. 272 to 285 and 377.

47. 'Manas me Ramkatha'—Dr. Baldev Prasad Mishra, p. 24.

'Uttara Purana', Sita is the daughter of Ravana, based upon the earlier Adbhuta Ramayana wherein Sita is born to Mandodari by her drinking the blood-pot of a rishi named Gritsmad, who lived at Dandakaranya; Ravana is said to have brought this pot to his palace and informed Mandodari that it was full of poison.[48] Rama and other characters have taken shapes according to the customs and culture of the society from which the author had his inspiration.

Puranic Versions

Ramayana has also found place in various Puranas adding to their worth and magnificence. The story of Valmiki Ramayana has been generally followed, but it has undergone deviation in details and spirit and high deification so much so that Rama becomes the incarnation not only of Vishnu but also of the Supreme Creator above the Three Gods themselves. Rama becomes the worshipful Supreme Being and Sita, his inseparable mate. The very name of 'Rama' is endowed with all powers of the Supreme Being, nay, greater than that of the Supreme Being Himself. Rama's devotees get a high place than Rama himself, and the servant of a devotee of Rama gets greater benefit than his own servant. The story of Ramayana permeates the Puranas and gets supreme religious significance. While doing so, it has undergone abnormal changes according to their contents.

Among the eighteen major and twenty minor Puranas, those which deserve mention from the point of view of the story of Ramayana, are the following:

(i) *Padma Purana*: This contains a complete version of the Ramayana, with the following salient features—

(a) Rama and Sita are treated as incarnations of Vishnu and Lakshmi, and Lakshmana, Bharata and Shatrughna of Sheshanaga, Sudarshana and Shankha respectively.

(b) Indra and Ravana also come to Sita's swayamvara and try to lift the bow, but in vain.

(c) Kumbhakarna dies after Ravana.

(d) Banishment of Sita on the words of a washerman is stated, but Rama and Sita meet at the end.

48. 'Jaina Sahitya Ka Itihas'—Nathuram Premi, p. 277.

(ii) *Vishnu Purana*: This contains Ramayana in brief with Sita as an Ayonija, i.e., self-born.

(iii) *Shiva Mahapurana*:

(a) This narrates a story of the 'Passion of Narada' (Chapters 3, 4).

(b) Test of Rama by Sati, the wife of Shiva, when Rama tells her that he took incarnation on the words of her husband Shiva. (24-26).[49]

(c) Hanuman has been described as having born from the semen of Shiva (Chapter 20).

(iv) *Srimad Devi Bhagawat Purana*: This tells that Shoorpanakha was disfigured by Rama and not by Lakshmana.

(v) *Narada Purana*: This contains the entire Ramayana in a summarised form, taking Rama-Lakshmana as the incarnations of Narayana-Shankarshana (Chapter 75).

(vi) *Agni Purana*: This gives a summary of Ramayana, wherein the real cause for Rama's exile is stated to be his cruelty towards Manthara.

(vii) *Brahma Vaivarta Purana*: A false Sita (Maya Sita) is created by the fire-god, and this Maya Sita is abducted by Ravana.

(viii) *Skanda Purana*: This contains the general Ramayana story, but has five special features —

(a) Dharmadutta, one of those responsible for the incarnation of Vishnu, is born as Dasharatha.

(b) Hanuman is sent by Rama to Mount Kailash to bring a stone for the erection of Shiva Linga but, as he does not arrive in time, Rama erects the same with sand.

(c) Hanuman is said to be the incarnation of Rudra.

(d) Ahalya, after restoration to her original form by Rama, performs pooja on the banks of the river Narmada.

(e) After breaking the bridge as per the advice of Vibhishana, Rama takes a trip to religious centres and erects Shiva Lingas.

(ix) *Koorma Purana*: The abduction of Maya Sita has been described.

49. These two have found place in Tulasi Ramayan in detail.

(x) *Garuda Purana:* Rama and not Lakshmana, disfigures Shoorpanakha.

(xi) *Brahmanda Purana:* The Uttara (last) Kanda of this Purana contains a complete Ramayana with a new orientation. It is in the form of a discussion between Shiva and Parvati, and treats Rama as incarnation of the Supreme God, the Almighty. This is named as Adhyatma Ramayana and is accepted to be the main source for Tulasi Ramayan, i.e., 'Ram Charit Manas'. Adhyatma Ramayana is supposed to be a work of the 14th or 15th century.[50]

The chief features of Adhyatma Ramayana are:

(a) The story of incarnation has reached its zenith by making Rama, Sita and Lakshmana the incarnations of the Supreme God (Para Brahma), Supreme Goddess (Prakriti) and Sheshanaga respectively. Kaushalya, Vasishtha, Vishwamitra, Janaka and also Ravana and Kumbhakarna know that Rama is an incarnation (1-2-27, 28).

(b) Rama shows to Kaushalya his divine form with four hands carrying Shankha, Chakra, Gada and Padma (1-3-17).

(c) The incident of the boatman is given immediately after the restoration of Ahalya to her original form. (1-6-2 to 5).

(d) It is Maya Sita who is carried away by Ravana (3-7--1 to 4).

(e) Complete fast by Lakshmana in exile (3-4-13 and 6-8-64) for twelve years.

(f) The existence of the vessel of Amrita (Ambrosia) in Ravana's stomach (6-11-53).

(g) Ravana carries away Sita with the intention of getting salvation at the hands of Rama, the Supreme Incarnation (7-4-10).

(xii) *Nrisimha Purana:* Valmiki's version is found here in a summarised form, but—

(a) Rama and Lakshmana are the incarnations of Lord Vishnu and Sheshanaga respectively.

(b) Ahalya turns into a stone by the curse of her husband Gautama.

(c) Ravana does not physically touch Sita while carrying her away from Panchavati to Lanka.

50. 'Ram Katha'—Dr. Bulkey, p. 164.

(xiii) *Kalika Purana*: Janaka finds Sita and two other babies while ploughing (Chapter 38).

(xiv) *Saura Purana*: The chief points to be noted are:

(a) Rama gets back his divine position by the grace of Shiva.

(b) Janaka gets Sita as his daughter by pleasing Parvati. She is said to be a part-incarnation of Parvati herself.

The following other puranas also contain the story of Ramayana in part or whole.

(i) *Hari Vamsha*: This contains a summary of Ramayana referring to all the important incidents from Rama's exile to Ravana's death. It has no reference to the Dasharatha's Putrakameshti Yagya. It has the name of Rama among the Avataras.

(ii) *Bhagawata Purana*: In the 10th and 11th chapters of the Ninth Skandha, the story of Rama is briefly stated. Rama and Sita are said to be the incarnations of Vishnu and Lakshmi respectively.

(iii) *Brahma Purana*: The chief features of Rama's story here are:

(a) Three boons and not two are given to Kaikeyi.

(b) The banishment of Sita is described at the end.

(iv) *Vahni Purana*: This states that Ahalya had turned into a stone by the curse of her husband Gautama.

(v) *Mahabhagawata (Devi) Purana*: This tells that—

(a) Shiva took the form of Hanuman to assist Rama in his search for Sita.

(b) Sita was the daughter of Mandodari.

(vi) *Brihaddharma Purana*: This states that Ravana did not physically touch Sita, when he carried her away from Panchavati to Lanka.

Thus we see that the several versions as found in the Puranas differ from the Valmiki Ramayana in various ways. So also we find differences in the Ramayanas based on religion and its various cults. The main ones are here mentioned with their chief characteristics:

(i) *Adbhuta Ramayana*: This appears to have been composed sometime after Adhyatma Ramayana.[51] It states —

51. 'Music in the Adbhuta Ramayana'—Journal, Music Academy, Madras, Part XVI, p. 66, By Dr. V. Raghavan.

(a) Rama and Sita are the incarnations of Vishnu and Lakshmi respectively. This is due to the curse of Narada.

(b) Sita is the daughter of Mandodari.

(c) Rama manifests his original form of Vishnu to Parashurama and Hanuman.

(ii) *Ananda Ramayana*: This is generally supposed to be a work of the 15th century, and subsequent to the period of Adhyatma Ramayana. It contains very many strange incidents not ordinarily found in other Ramayanas:

(a) Ravana's abduction of Kaushalya at the time of her marriage with Dasharatha.

(b) Ravana's presence at the time of the swayamvara of Sita at Mithila.

(c) Birth of Sita from fire (*Agni-ja Sita*).

(d) Uma's testing of Rama after Sita's abduction by Ravana.

(e) Birth of only Kusha to Sita, and the creation of Lava by Valmiki.

(f) Celestial women falling in love with Rama, and he promising them fulfilment of their desire in Krishnavatara.

(g) Rama's boon to a maid-servant who sincerely loved him to take birth as Radha and himself as Krishna.

(iii) *Hanumat Samhita*: This states that Sita creates from her own body 18,108 ladies, and that Rama also assumes the same number of forms and makes merry with them like Krishna with the Gopikas.

(iv) *Agastya Ramayana*: This contains the story of Bhanupratapa-Arimardana, and the rebirth of king Kuntala and Sindhumati as Dasharatha and Kaushlya respectively.

(v) *Sauharda Ramayana*: This is supposed to have been related by Sharabhanga Rishi. Rama and Lakshmana are stated to speak and understand the language of the monkeys.

(vi) *Swayambhuva Ramayana*: This is in the form of a dialogue between Brahma and Narada, and speaks of Sita as the daughter of Mandodari.[52]

52. The matter offered here about Puranas and other Ramayanas is based on — (a) 'Goswami Tulasidas aur Ram Katha' — Satyadev Chaturvedi, pp. 71-82 and (b) 'Ram Katha' — Dr. Bulkey, pp. 153-178.

Ramayana Abroad

The story of Ramayana spread itself in foreign countries due to its catching plot and supreme qualities, and forms part of their literatures. Its influence has been more in the far-eastern countries than in the Western. Certain important and striking features of the Ramayanas of the foreign countries are shown below—

(1) *Tibetian Ramayana*:

(a) Dasharatha has only two wives. The elder wife gives birth to Rama, while the younger to Lakshmana.

(b) Sita is the daughter of Ravana. As it is said that she would be the cause for the ruin of Lanka and Ravana himself, she is thrown into the ocean in a vessel and is picked up by some cultivators on the other shore.

(c) Rama, of his own will, goes to the forest, leaving the kingdom to Lakshmana and marries Sita on the pressure of the cultivators.

(d) Ravana does not touch Sita while carrying her away.

(e) The life-centre of Ravana is said to be in his thumb.

(2) *Khotani Ramayana (of East Turkistan)*:

(a) Rama and Lakshmana are the only two sons of Sahasrabahu, the son of Dasharatha. Parashurama kills Sahasrabahu and Rama kills Parashurama.

(b) Both Rama and Lakshmana marry Sita as per the custom of polyandry in that locality.

(c) Ravana, though defeated, is not killed.

(d) Birth of Sita as the daughter of Dashagreeva (Ravana) as in Tibetian Ramayana.

(e) Lakshmana draws lines around the cottage before leaving Sita for the search of Rama.

(f) Blasphemy against Sita and consequently her getting into the earth.

(3) *Kakavin Ramayana*: This is supposed to have been written by one Yogiswara of Indonesia in the 12th century A.D.

(a) Ravana shows to Sita the false heads of Rama and Lakshmana to seduce her.

(b) Sita sends to Rama through Hanuman the *choodamani* with a letter.

(c) Indrajit has seven wives who also fight for him in the battlefield and are killed.

(4) *Serat Ram*: This is a modern work of Java. It follows Valmiki Ramayana but has the early part of Ravana's story in the beginning.

(5) *Hikayat Seri Ram*:

(a) 'Mandudari' is Dasharatha's wife; Ravana brings a 'Maya-Mandudari' to Lanka, who gives birth to Sita. Getting to know the evil effects of the child, she is thrown into the sea. One 'Maharesi Kali' saves her. At Sita's swayamvara, Ravana and other kings attend but Rama gets her hand.

(b) There is no mention of Kaikeyi, and Rama goes to the forest of his own will.

(c) Vali, Sugriva and Anjani are the children of Gautama and Ahalya. Hanuman is the son of Rama and Anjani who had turned into monkeys as a result of their eating the same fruit. Hanuman's birth was in Anjani's virginhood due to Gautama's curse for hiding her mother's action.

(d) Vishnu is defeated by Ravana. He is born as the son of Dasharatha to kill Ravana, and succeeds.

(e) Sita is exiled by Rama, as he found her drawing the picture of Ravana.

(6) *Pathani Ramayana*: Sita is the daughter of Ravana.

(7) *Serat Kand of Java*: This generally follows 'Seri Ram' with Sita as the daughter of Ravana.[53]

(8) *Ream Ker of Indo-China* (*Fame of Rama*):

(a) Janaka while ploughing the banks of Jamuna finds Sita and adopts her as his daughter.

(b) The seven trees which Rama shot through in one arrow, were grown on the back of 'Maharajanaga', the king of snakes.

(c) Sita is exiled due to her drawing the picture of Ravana on her fan.

53. 'The authors of ancient Ramayanas in Java were Shaivaits. The Ramayana story is engraved in picture-form in two Shaiva temples'.—'Ram Katha'—Dr. Bulkey, p. 232.

(9) *Ram Kiyen of Siam*: This is generally based on Ream Ker with the following notable features:

(a) Lakshmana and Hanuman fight (19th Chapter).

(b) Ravana comes as an ascetic before 'Sethu-bandhan' and advises Rama to give up the idea of war with Ravana (Chapter 25).

(c) Hanuman makes love with many ladies. Once he is even with Mandodari in the form of Ravana when he goes to spoil her Sanjivan Yagya. (Chapter 34).

(d) In another place, Hanuman goes to Ravana and denouncing Rama, offers himself to fight against Rama. He actually does so for a day, finds out the secrets of Indrajit and gets Mandodari from Ravana for a night (Chapter 35).

(10) *Ram Jataka of North Siam*: It is a work of the 16th century in 'Lava' Language. The chief characteristics are:

(a) Rama and Ravana are cousins. Rama has only one brother Lakshmana.

(b) Rama marries several times before marrying Sita and has four sons from them, who also join him in the war.

(c) Rama marries twice during his search for Sita, first the sister of Vali-Sugriva, and secondly the widow of Vali. These two wives with their sons Hanuman and Khwan Theafa join Rama in the war.

This is an allegory in the Jataka style — Rama as Buddha, Ravana as Devadatta, Dasharatha as Shuddhodana, Lakshmana as Ananda and Sita as the beggar-maid Uppalavanna.

(11) *Yam Pve of Burma*: This generally follows 'Ram Kiyen' with the following notable changes:

(a) Shoorpanakha (whose name here is Gambi) comes in the form of a deer and entices away Rama. When Rama shoots at it, she comes out in her original demon form.

(b) Lakshmana on pressure from Sita, goes in search of Rama. He leaves Sita alone after drawing a line around the cottage.

(12) *Libro Da Saita* (*By J. Phencheons*):

This contains the story of the ten Avataras of Vishnu including Rama. This generally follows Valmiki but —

(a) Sita is born from fire (Agni-ja).

(b) Rama goes to the forest, of his own choice.

(13) *Mithologi Des Indu* (*By De Polie*):

This contains the Ramayana story also in detail, where Sita is said to have been born out of blood (Rakta-ja).

(14) *Il Vijajio Al Indie Orientali* (By P. F. Vinjenaja Maria, published in Rome.):

This states that Sita's birth was in Lanka.[54]

Thus we see that the story of Ramayana had spread far and wide even in foreign countries centuries ago, taking various forms in accordance with the traditions and customs of those peoples. The main story also has undergone changes in material particulars.

Ramayana in Sanskrit Literature:

The story of Ramayana has been taken as a theme by several authors of Sanskrit, as its plot is exceedingly enchanting. All the works have had their sources in the Valmiki Ramayana and the aforesaid Puranas, with minor changes according to the genius of the authors and reflection of their times. Here follows a short survey of the Ramayana literature as found in the various Sanskrit works. This can be divided into three classes, viz.

I. Mahakavyas, II. Dramas and III. Miscellaneous.

I. Mahakavyas:

1. *Raghuvamsha* (of Kalidasa): The story of Rama is related in six cantos—ninth to fifteenth (based upon Valmiki Ramayana) and includes the Uttara Kanda. The salient features are:

(a) Ahalya was turned into a stone.

(b) Sita is nowhere mentioned as the incarnation of goddess Lakshmi.

2. *Ravana Vaha* or *Sethubandha*: This is supposed to be a work of about the 5th century A.D. The identity of the author

54. The matter offered here about the Ramayanas of foreign countries is based on (a) 'Manas Ki Ram Katha'—Parasuram Chaturvedi, pp. 85-91; (b) 'Goswami Tulasidas aur Ram Katha'—Satyadev Chaturvedi, pp. 114-122 and (c) 'Ram Katha'—Dr. Bulkey, pp. 228 to 248.

is not known. Love of the Rakshasa ladies is described[55] in the 10th Sarga.

3. *Bhattikavya or Ravana Vadha*: This is supposed to be a work of about the 6th century A.D. It contains the first six kandas of Valmiki and has the following special features:

(a) Dasharatha is shown as a Shaiva.

(b) It is not only Rama who fights with Khara-Dooshana but also Lakshmana (3-33).

(c) Pranks of love by the Rakshasa women at Lanka (Sarga—11).

(d) Shiva reminds Rama about his godhood. (23-16).

4. *Janaki Harana*: This is said to be a work of the 8th century by Kumaradasa. It is composed in various meters based on the six kandas of Valmiki Ramayana. The chief characteristics are:

(a) Ahalya turns into a stone (Sarga—3).

(b) Pranks of love by Dasharatha with his wives (Sarga—3).

(c) Rama's love for Sita is depicted only after the breaking of the bow and before the marriage. His passion goes to the extent of vulgarity (Sarga—7).

(d) Passion of the Rakshasa women in Lanka before the war.

5. *Rama Charita*: This is supposed to be a work of Abhinanda in the first half of the 9th century A.D. The notable points are:

(a) Sugriva himself comes to Rama after the rainy season without being reminded by Lakshmana (Sarga—5).

(b) Rama sends to Sita through Hanuman an anklet and a saree with the ring. (Sarga—8).

(c) The sexual indulgence of Ravana has been described in detail (Sarga—18).

6. *Dashavatara Charita*: This is a work of the 11th century A.D. by Kshemendra of Kashmir. It is a short sketch of Ramayana in 294 stanzas and has the following special features:

(a) It begins with the description of Ravana's penance, boons and atrocities.

55. This description is found in 'Janaki Haranam' of Kumaradasa, 'Rama Charita' of Abhinanda and also in Kamba Ramayanam.

(b) Sita is born of lotus as the incarnation of Lakshmi (Padma-ja) whom Ravana adopts as his daughter.

(c) Rama is the incarnation of Vishnu.

7. *Udara Raghava*: This is a work of the 14th century A.D. by Sakalyamalla. The salient features are:

(a) Rama is a full incarnation of Vishnu, while Lakshmana, Bharata and Shatrughna are part-incarnations of Sheshanaga, Sudarshanachakra and Shankha respectively.

(b) Sita's insistence to follow Rama to the forest, stating that she had never heard of Sita not accompanying Rama in any former Ramayana.

8. *Janaki Parinaya*: This is a work by Chakra Kavi of the 17th century A.D., relating only the Bala Kanda of Valmiki in eight sargas. Dasharatha's love for his wives is described in detail in the sixth sarga.[56]

9. *Ramlingamrita*: This is supposed to be a work of 1608 A.D.[57] by one poet of Banaras named Advaita, in eighteen sargas. Its chief features are:

(a) The work begins with the curse of Bhrigu Rishi on Jaya-Vijaya, the two watchmen at the gate of Vishnu's abode, who are born as Ravana and Kumbhakarna. Vibhishana is also referred to as Prahlada. Vishnu is requested to incarnate himself as Rama. (Sarga—1).

(b) The childhood of Rama is given in detail. Rama shows his divine form to Kaushalya.[58] (Sarga—2).

(c) Ravana tries the Shiva's bow at the time of the swayamvara, but in vain (Sarga—3).[59]

(d) Lakshmi is said to have come with the gods to the marriage of Rama-Sita and tells Sita the secret of Rama's incarnation. (Sarga—4)

56. This similarity with Kamba Ramayanam is noteworthy.

57. This is a contemporary work to Tulasidas and the place of the poet's residence was Kashi, and hence its great importance. The manuscript copy of this work is in London—('Ram Katha'—Dr. Bulkey, p. 186).

58. This is found in Tulasi Ramayan.

59. Tulasi Ramayan also has stated of the presence of Ravana and also Banasura at the time of the Swayamvara.

(e) After the Shoorpanakha incident at Panchavati, Narada is said to have informed Ravana about the beauty of Sita, hearing which he goes to Mareecha. (Sarga—6)

(f) Ahalya who was a stone as a result of her husband's curse, is restored to her original form by Rama while he goes in search of Sita. The incident of the boatman compelling[60] Rama to wash his feet before getting into his boat, is depicted here. (Sarga—6)

(g) Hanuman gives also a letter to Sita at Ashoka Garden along with the ring. (Sarga—7)

(h) Love of the Rakshasa women has been described. (Sarga—8).

(i) Rama and Lakshmana are carried away by Ahi-Mahi Ravana to the under-world and Hanuman brings them back with the help of Makaradhwaja. (Sarga—8)

(j) Ravana feels happy that he would die at the hands of Rama, the incarnation of Vishnu, and adores the greatness of the name of 'Rama' by the very utterence of which all the monkeys are able to cross the sea. (Sarga—10)

(k) There is no mention about Sita's fire-ordeal after the death of Ravana.

(l) Kaikeyi tells Rama that she sent him to the forest to kill Ravana on the compulsion of God Indra. (Sarga—12)

(m) There is no mention of the banishment of Sita, but the birth of Kusha-Lava at the Ashrama of Valmiki is mentioned. Rama, getting this information from Narada, goes to the Ashrama with his army. After a regular war, Rama returns to Ayodhya with Sita and their two sons. (Sarga—13)

II. Dramas:

Drama is, in general, a source for finding temporary aesthetic pleasure. As drama is chiefly meant for the pleasure of the moment, the authors have taken the liberty to change the plot of Ramayana according to their free imagination much more than the writers of Mahakavyas, who always had the

60. This compelling by the boatman is found in Tulasi Ramayan in a very striking manner immediately after Rama's leaving Ayodhya with Lakshmana and Sita, and before going to the Ashrama of Bharadwaja, whereafter they go to Chitrakoota.

sense of the finer aspects of the culture and traditions of their societies. It is only in the drama that we find the story of Ramayana taking longer strides, and the plot running through out-of-the-way channels. In certain places, it has even surpassed the limits of human possibilities and cultural barriers just to arouse in the audience a sense of the baser feelings, specially of love. The salient features of the important Sanskrit dramas are given below:

1. *Pratima Nataka* (Probably by Bhasa):

(a) Shatrughna is present at Ayodhya at the time when Rama starts to the forest.

(b) Bharata is stated to be the younger brother of Lakshmana.

(c) The story of the abduction of Sita is different. Ravana comes to Panchavati as a Sanyasi and tells that the proper way to perform obsequies to his dead father is by offering the golden deer of the Himalayas. Just at that time Mareecha appears as a golden deer nearby, and Lakshmana is not there, as he has already gone to receive the Head of the Ashramites. Rama pursues the deer and Ravana carries away Sita to Lanka.

(d) Bharata hears from the minister Sumantra about the abduction of Sita and rebukes his mother Kaikeyi who states that she procured the exile of Rama consulting Vasishtha, Vamadeva etc. Then Bharata orders his army to march in order to help Rama.

(e) After the death of Ravana, Rama is crowned at Panchavati itself, whereafter all return to Ayodhya in the Pushpaka plane.

(f) Rama is depicted only as a man.

2. *Abhisheka Nataka* (Probably by Bhasa):

(a) There is no bridging of the sea but the sea itself gives way, and the forces of Rama march on to Lanka.

(b) The false head of Sita is shown to Rama and Lakshmana.

(c) Rama and Sita are depicted as incarnations of Vishnu and Lakshmi respectively.

3. *Mahavira Charita* of Bhavabhuti:

(a) Rama and Lakshmana meet Sita and Urmila respectively, their would-be wives, at the Ashrama of Vishwamitra.

(b) An ambassador of Ravana comes to Vishwamitra's ashrama, and there itself the bow is broken by Rama.

(c) Shoorpanakha comes to Mithila in the form of Manthara with a false letter of Kaikeyi, wherein Rama's exile is demanded on the strength of the boon. Rama offers to Bharata his sandals and leaves for the forest with Sita and Lakshmana.

(d) Vali stops Rama on his way and is killed by Rama in an open fight.

4. *Uttara Rama Charita* by Bhavabhuti:

This contains a new form of the Uttara Kanda.

(a) Sita is banished by Rama hearing from Durmukha the blasphemy by the washerman.

(b) Shudra Shambooka Muni is killed by Rama at the instance of Vishishta to get back the life of a dead brahmin child.

(c) The battle of Kusha-Lava with Rama and his forces.

(d) After Sita proves her chastity to the people at the Valmiki ashrama, Rama returns happily with Sita and their two sons to his capital.

5. *Kundamala* (Probably by Dingnag):

(a) When Rama's forces approach the Valmiki ashrama, the sage with his astral powers offers to the ladies of the ashrama the power to become invisible. Thus Sita meets Rama in an invisible form, and Rama, seeing the reflexion of Sita in water, falls unconscious.

(b) After the singing of Kusha and Lava in the court of Rama, Sita, who then comes to the scene, requests her mother (Earth) to appear if she had been strictly chaste. The mother-earth accordingly appears and Rama accepts Sita.

6. *Anargha Raghava* by Murari: This generally follows Mahavir Charita, but here Ravana's messenger, Shaushkala by name, comes to Mithila and asks for Sita on behalf of Ravana.

7. *Bala Ramayana* by Rajashekhara: This is the longest Drama on Ramayana and generally follows Bhavabhooti and Murari with the following deviations:

(a) Ravana himself comes to the Swayamwara of Sita and asks for her hand, refusing to appear for the test stipulated by Janaka, but Rama achieves success in the test. Ravana leaves the place, stating that Rama is his enemy. (Act-1)

(b) Ravana tries to get assistance from Parashurama in vain. (Act-2)

(c) Once, finding Dasharatha and Kaikeyi away from Ayodhya, Shoorpanakha, with Mahamaya and a maid-servant, appears as Kaikeyi, Dasharatha and Manthara respectively, and sends Rama to forest with Sita and Lakshmana. (Act-6)

(d) The false head of Sita is thrown by Malyavan before Rama.

8. *Hanuman Nataka* or *Mahanataka:*

(a) This contains the description of the love of Rama and Sita after marriage to the extent of extreme sexuality. (Act-2)

(b) Bharata is at Ayodhya at the time of the exile of Rama. (3-5)

(c) Rama leaves the cottage with Lakshmana after drawing a line around it to procure the golden deer for Sita. (3-27)

(d) Rama directly fights with Vali and kills him. (Act-5)

(e) Angada instigates Ravana to take revenge against Rama for killing his father. (8-2)

(f) The false head of Sita is shown by Ravana to Rama and Lakshmana. Later he appears before Sita taking the form of Rama with ten false heads on hand to deceive Sita. (Act-10)

(g) Ravana sends an ambassador, Lohitaksha, to Rama for truce stating that he would release Sita in return for the axe of Parashurama. Rama rejects the proposal. (Act-14)

(h) Angada proposes to attack Rama with all the monkey forces as a revenge, but a voice from heaven states that Vali would kill Rama as a hunter in his later incarnation as Krishna. (14-75)

9. *Ashcharya Choodamani* by Shakti Bhadra:

(a) Rama and Sita have a ring and a choodamani given to them by Rishis, having the power to show the real forms of disguised Rakshasas. (3-8)

(b) Ravana abducts Sita assuming the form of Rama with the help of his charioteer who is in the form of Lakshmana. Meanwhile Shoorpanakha speaks to Rama taking the form of Sita, while Mareecha speaks to Lakshmana assuming the form of Rama.

10. *Ramabhyudaya* by Yashovarma: Here at first Lakshmana pursues the deer, and on hearing the false news that he was in danger, Rama also leaves the cottage leaving Sita alone.

11. *Prasanna Raghava* by Jaideva (not of Geeta Govinda):

This is supposed to be a work of the 13th century A.D. The special features are:

(a) Ravana and Banasura are present in the swayamvara of Sita and they try to bend the bow in vain. Ravana determines to abduct Sita. (Act-1).

(b) Pre-matrimonial love of Rama and Sita in the garden of Mithila is described before the breaking of the bow (Act-2).

12. *Maithili Kalyan* by Hastimall: (1290 A.D.).

It depicts the pre-matrimonial love of Rama and Sita before the swayamvara in the temple of Kamadeva (Act-1, and also in Madhavi Vana. (Act-2).

13. *Unmatta Raghava* by Bhaskara Bhatta: (14th century A.D.).

We find here Sita being turned into a deer due to the curse of Rishi Durvasa, and Rama's search for her everywhere. Rama finds out Sita with the help of Agastya.

14. *Janaki Parinaya* by Ramabhadra Dikshita:

(a) Viradha assumes the form of Rama to abduct Sita and Shoorpanakha assumes the form of Sita, as a result of which Viradha carries away Shoorpanakha. Such incidents are found in plenty in this drama.[61]

III. *Miscellaneous:*

(1) *Hans-Sandesh* or *Hans Doot*—(13th century A.D.).

Here a swan brings the message from Rama to Sita.

(2) *Bhramaradoot* by Nayyayik Rudra Vachaspati:

In this work a bee brings the message of Rama to Sita.

61. References to Mahakavyas and Dramas are based on —
   (a) 'History of Sanskrit Literature' — Dr. Baldev Upadhyaya.
   (b) 'Ram Katha' — Dr. Bulkey, pp. 180-199.
   (c) 'Goswami Tulasidas aur Ram Katha' — Satyadev Chaturvedi, pp. 82-93.

Thus the story of Ramayana has multifarious forms in the several Sanskrit works. These have been, to a very great extent, the sources for the Ramayanas of all the languages of India. The languages of North India belonging to the Indo-Aryan family, have evolved from Veidic Sanskrit to Sanskrit on one side, and Prakrits on the other, which in turn have evolved into various Prakrit-Apabhranshas yielding to the various modern languages from Sindhi in the West to Bengali and Assamese in the East. So also in the peninsular region of South India, the Proto-Dravidian language has evolved into the modern Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam languages. All these modern Indian languages have in their literatures, Ramayanas of various kinds and forms according to their culture and genius, with their main source in the Valmiki Ramayana and in general other Ramayanas of Sanskrit and other languages. The salient features of the important Ramayanas of Modern Indian languages are described below:

(1) *Kamba Ramayanam* by Kambar in Tamil:

Among the Ramayanas of the modern Indian languages, Kamba Ramayanam in Tamil is supposed to be the oldest, dating back to the 12th century A.D., if not the 9th century A.D.[62] This is not a translation of Valmiki Ramayana but an adaptation suiting South Indian culture and literary traditions of Tamil. This contains only the story of the first six kandas of Valmiki Ramayana. The seventh kanda by Ottakkootthan, a contemporary of Kambar, closes the story of Ramayana with a happy ending.

Kambar has deviated from Valmiki in various places of strategic importance and cultural significance, the detailed descriptions of which will be found in the fourth chapter of this work.

(2) *Ranganatha Ramayana, i.e., Dvipada Ramayana* by Buddha Raju in Telugu (12th century A.D.):

This contains only the first six kandas. The salient deviations are —

(i) Janaka announces that he got Sita from the earth while ploughing. (1-27)

62. 'Tamil Culture' — Vol. VI, Nos. 1, 2 and Vol. VII, No. 3. ('Age of Kamban' by Paul Nadar.)

(ii) Lakshmana gets two boons from the goddess of sleep, the first being a long sleep to his wife Urmila for the fourteen years of his exile and the second, sleeplessness for himself for the said period. (2-3 to 5).

(iii) As found in Jaina Ramayana of Pauma Chariya, Lakshmana cuts the head of Shoorpanakha's son unknowingly while cutting grass at Panchavati. (3-4 and 5).

(iv) Lakshmana draws seven lines around the cottage before going in search of Rama leaving Sita alone (3-14).

(v) Story of Kalanemi at the time of Hanuman's flight to Himalayas. (6-103 to 106).

The other Telugu Ramayanas, namely Bhaskara Ramayana, Molla Ramayana, Gopinatha Ramayana and others, have no special deviations from the original.

(3) *Torave Ramayana* by Narahari in Kannada (16th century A.D.):

The following features are notable.

(a) Lakshmana kills Shambooka, the son of Shoorpanakha (3-3).

(b) Fire takes away half the portion of Sita before her abduction. (3-9).

(c) Lakshmana keeps awake and fasts for the fourteen years of his exile. (6-45).

(d) Only the first six kandas are narrated here.

The other one is Pampa Ramayana by Nagachanda, following the Jaina Ramayana 'Pauma Chariya'.

(4) *Adhyatma Ramayana* by Ezuttacchan in Malayalam (16th Century):

This is not a verbatim translation of the Sanskrit Adhyatma Ramayana but an adaptation.[63] "He has taken every liberty with

63. "The inspiration behind his message was not purely one of religious enthusiasm, but was characteristic of a poet-seer who gave his readers through the magic of his words aesthetic pleasure first and salvation later. The process made them doubly prepared for the message. In this respect he is on the same plane as Kamban in Tamil and Tulasidas in Hindi. Neither of these poets thought of translating into his own language the original epic word by word". ('Ezhuttacchan and his Age' — Dr. C. Achuta Menon, University of Madras, p. 106).

the theme", says Dr. Achuta Menon, " to make his venture a first class production. Sometimes we find him closely following the original, especially when announcing a religious doctrine. But at other times, we notice his readiness to illuminate the dark corners of the original, elucidate what is obscure in the latter or introduce new ideas to paint a situation in the new light. In doing this he has made ample use of his knowledge of other works on Ramayana."[64] Though, "the original Adhyatma was also intended to sing the glory of Rama as a God, the reader never derives so lively and abiding an impression of this as he does from Ezhuttacchan's work".[65] A few salient pictures are the following:

(a) Sita puts the 'garland of glances' on Rama before she puts on him the garland of marriage.[66]

(b) 'Sita expresses a desire to see the wives of the monkey chief and the *vimana* (plane) lands there to pick them up. Ezhuttacchan's Sita invites them to Ayodhya, and they join the triumphal party in their journey thither'.[67]

(c) Rama does not order Lakshmana or make a gesture to him (as in Tulasi) but keeps the Rakshasi (Shoorpanaka) at bay, when she approaches Sita in a menacing attitude. Rama also makes it clear that her conduct was due to her despair at her disappointed love. "Shoorpanakha approached Sita Devi in a menacing mood. Raghavan with anxiety resisted her and kept her at bay. Seeing this Lakshmana rushed with his sword drawn from its sheath and cut her ears, breast and nose."[68]

(d) Vali has asked Sugriva to close the entrance through which he went to kill the Rakshasa Mayavi should blood come out of it, and not to close if it should be milk. Sugriva closes it, seeing blood coming out of it. This change in colour was due to the magic of Mayavi, not known to either Vali or Sugriva.[69]

(e) Vali is not directly accused of any improper conduct with Sugriva's wife. Rama mainly accuses him for his 'paying scanty

64. *Ibid.*, p. 106.
65. *Ibid.*, p. 107.
66. *Ibid.*, p. 123.
67. *Ibid.*, p. 124. In Kamban the women are left behind after the exchange of courtesies.
68. *Ibid.*, p. 114.
69. *Ibid.*, p. 115.

attention to the condition of his brother, who after all was not despicable.[70]

(f) "According to Ezhuttacchan all who have had contact with the deity either through devotion or enmity, free themselves instantaneously from all effects of their evil actions."[71]

Other Ramayanas in Malayalam, viz., Rama Charitam, Kannassa Ramayana, Kerala Varma Ramayana and others are not so significant in their appeal.

(5) *Ramayana in the Virhoras*: Among the aboriginals of Bihar, certain oral stories of Ramayana are prevalent, which are found in 'The Virhoras'[72] written by Sharat Chandra Roy. The main features are:

(a) Dasharatha has seven wives.

(b) Dasharatha at first sends Bharata and Shatrughna with the brahmin Vishwamitra instead of Rama and Lakshmana as promised. The deceit is found out later by the brahmin.

(c) Sita once lifts the bow of Shiva while cleaning the house.

(d) Lakshmana eats only mud for a period of 12 years.

(e) Lakshmana, while starting to assist Rama leaving Sita alone, gives her a few mustard seeds stating their magical power. When Ravana comes, Sita throws one on him who immediately turns unconscious for an hour. She again throws another one with the same result and repeats this several times. Finally Ravana asks her to throw all the seeds on him so that he may die. She accordingly throws them, thereby burning him to ashes. But Ravana comes out of the ashes and carries Sita away holding her tuft of hair.[73]

(f) Hanuman enters Lanka in the form of a parrot.

(g) Rama and Lakshmana cross the ocean sitting on the tail of Hanuman.

(h) Ravana is killed by Lakshmana.

(i) Lakshmana kills Kumbhakarna after the death of Ravana.

70. *Ibid.*, p. 116.
71. *Ibid.*, p. 118.
72. The Virhoras — Sharad Chandra Roy, (see 'Ram Katha' — Dr. Kamil Bulkey, p. 214).
73. 'Ram Katha' — Dr. Kamil Bulkey, p. 344.

(6) *Singhali Ramayana:*

(a) Vali takes the place of Hanuman, burns Lanka and brings back Sita to Rama.

(b) Uma makes Sita draw a picture of Ravana on a plantain leaf and throws it below the cot. Rama makes a surprise visit and sits on the cot which immediately shivers. On knowing the cause, he becomes angry and directs his brother to assassinate Sita but he leaves Sita in the forest and returns with a bloodstained sword after killing an animal.

(7) *Kashmiri Ramayana* by Divakar Prakash Bhutt:

This is a work of the 18th century A.D. It contains some salient features which are:

(a) The whole epic is in the form of a conversation between Shiva and Parvati.

(b) Rama is the incarnation of the Supreme God and Lakshmana, Bharata and Shatrughna of Sheshnaga, Shankha and Chakra respectively, the emblems of Vishnu.

(c) In Ayodhya Kanda, Narada reminds Rama that he is God-incarnate.

(d) Sita is born to Mandodari.

(e) Renunciation of Sita on account of her drawing the picture of Ravana.

(8) *Krittivasa Ramayana* :

This is the famous Bengali Ramayana of the 16th century and has the following chief characteristics:

(a) Quarrel between Shiva and Parvati, and the latter forces the former to help Ravana.

(b) Friendship between Rama and Guha in their boyhood.

(d) Abandonment of Sita due to her drawing the picture of Ravana.

(e) Influence of Vaishnava Bhakti cult—

(i) Veerabhahu, the son of Ravana, throws away his bow in the battle field seeing on Rama the emblems of Vishnu.

(ii) Ravana himself shows reverence to Taranisen in the battle field seeing the signs of a Vaishnava on his forehead and body.

(iii) Effect of Krishna cult. At the time of the Nagapasa incident in the Lanka fight, Rama shows himself to Garuda as Murali-

dhara (Krishna with flute), but this is not relished by Hanuman who attempts to snatch away his flute.

(f) Story of Harishchandra finds place in Bala Kanda.

(9) *Vichitra Ramayana* in Oriya:

This is by Vishwanatha Khuntia, wherein the birth of Sita is stated to have been out of the corpse of Vedavati. When Vedavati does not yield to Ravana, he kills her and returns to Lanka. Narada meets and informs him that the corpse is still lying uncared for. Ravana goes and brings that corpse. He orders Mandodari to cook the corpse and serve him. When served, he changes his mind and gets the dishes thrown into the sea. From her flesh comes out Sita, and Janaka gets her.[74]

In the Oriya language, Balramdas Ramayana is very famous, but it contains no specific deviations from Valmiki. It is in the form of a dialogue between Shiva and Parvati.

(10) *Bhavartha Ramayana* in Marathi:

This is by Eknath of the 17th century A.D. and is generally based on Valmiki, Adhyatma and Ananda Ramayanas. Therein it is stated that Ravana was present at the swayamvara of Sita, as is found in Tulasi Ramayan.

(11) *Ramayana Sar* in Gujarati:

This work by Narmad of the 19th century A.D. states that the exile of Sita is due to —

(a) the blasphemy by a washerman and

(b) Sita's drawing the picture of Ravana.

(12) (A) *Tulasi Ramayan* in Hindi:

This is the famous 'Ram Charit Manas' by Tulasidas. Detailed study of the same is made in Chapter IV. Tulasidas himself has brought out certain other Ramayanas also, such as Kavitavali Ramayan, Geetavali Ramayan, etc., but his Ram Charit Manas stands supreme so far as Ramayana is concerned.

(B) *Sur Ramayana*:

This is a collection of certain lyrics of the famous blind poet Surdas, the Milton of Hindi Literature, wherein it is stated that

74. 'Ram Katha' — Dr. Kamil Bulkey, p. 295.

Lakshmana had drawn a line around the cottage before starting to assist Rama leaving Sita alone.[75]

(C) *Ramachandrika* :

This Hindi Ramayana by Keshav Das, a contemporary of Tulasidas, is notable for varieties of metres, with the following salient features in the plot :

(a) Ravana and Banasura were present in the swayamvara as is stated in Tulasi Ramayan.

(b) Angada had internal enmity with Rama, as is found in Mahanataka (26th Chapter).

(c) Contains Uttarakanda also — Exile of Sita, war between Lava-Kusa and Rama.

(D) *Saket* :

This is a modern Ramayana by Rashtra Kavi Maithili Saran Gupta with special reference to Urmila and her pangs of separation.

There are several other Ramayanas in Hindi numbering to more than fifty[76] but all of them rank far below Tulasi Ramayan.

Summary :

Ramayana has its original sources in the vedas, in the fight between Indra and Vritrasura, and Sita being mentioned as Goddess of cultivation, though the story of Ramayana as such is not found in any form. The original composer of Ramayana, as we know it today, is Valmiki, who coordinated the folk tales and other stories like Jatakas prevalent in his time and produced a magnificent epic, giving an attractive shape to the story. This epic contained at least five kandas, viz., Ayodhya to Lanka, and probably Bala Kanda too in an initial form. Later, this Bala Kanda was elaborated by others, and Uttara Kanda was added to it by about the 2nd or 3rd century A.D.

This epic caught the imagination of all people who came in contact with it, and gave rise to various similar epics with suitable eliminations, deviations and additions. Thus Ramayana spread over Sumatra, Java, Siam and other South-East Asian countries in addition to the different parts of India. From the very early

75. 'Sur Sagar' — Nagari Pracharini Sabha edition — Part II — Nos. 460 to 613.

76. 'Goswami Tulasidas aur Ram Katha' — Satyadev Chaturvedi, pp. 98-100.

Christian Era, we find works of high literary merit on Ramayana in almost all the languages of India in many colourful forms suitable to local culture. Rama and Sita and the other characters closely connected with them, got gradually deified as Avatars, and consequently we have the zenith in Kamba Ramayanam, Tulasi Ramayan and others, thereby awakening a spirit of deep devotion to these characters particularly to Rama and to the epic in general. Rama is the incarnation of Vishnu in Hinduism, Bodhisatva in Buddhism and Eighth Brahma Deva in Jainism.[77]

Ramayana is thus an indispensable and integral part of Indian culture.

77. 'Ram Katha' — Dr. Bulkey, pp. 458-459.

CHAPTER—II

BRIEF SURVEY OF RAMAYANA IN TAMIL BEFORE KAMBAR AND IN HINDI BEFORE TULASIDAS

(i) *A brief survey of Ramayana before Kambar in Tamil Literature:*

Sangam Literature: The earliest references to Tamil Literature are found in the works of the Tamil Sangams (Academies) which are generally supposed to have existed between 500 B.C. and 500 A.D.[1] These sangams are divided into three periods namely, First Sangam, Medieval Sangam and Last Sangam. Presumably, there were good literary works in Tamil prior to the starting of the first Sangam, but unfortunately no work of either the first Sangam or the period prior to it is available, and only references to certain obsolete compositions are found in later works. The earliest available work is Tolkappiyam, a standard grammar of Tamil, supposed to be a work of 4th century B.C., and it is the only available work of the Medieval Sangam period. In this work though we find stray references to 'Mayon' and 'Mal'—God the Protector—corresponding to Vishnu, there is no specific reference

1. 'Kamba Ramayanam — A Study' — V. V. S. Aiyar, p. XXXI (Introduction).

to the story of Ramayana. But it appears that stories based on the Ramayana were prevalent in the period.

The Last or the Third Sangam has fortunately given us a rich reservoir of Tamil Literature in the form of—

(a) 'Ettutthohai' comprising of eight monumental works,

(b) 'Patthuppattu' (Ten Idylls) and

(c) 'Pathinen-Kil-Kanakku' (Eighteen Minor Moral works). Specific references to Ramayana are found in at least three works of Ettutthohai viz., Kalitthohai, Ahananuru and Purananuru.

"Even in the earliest time", says Prof. S. Vaiyappuri Pillai, "this national story has spread throughout the length and breadth of our country. In Purananuru and Ahananuru which belong to the earliest strata of extent Tamil Literature and which may be ascribed to the early centuries of the Christian era, we find references to Ramayana story. Later, *there seems to have been a complete version of the Ramayana even in those days.* It was in venba metre and a few verses of it have come down to us. Thus we see that the story of Rama had been exercising a potent influence in the Tamil land from the earliest times. Local legends too were absorbed into the main story. The mythological element in the original, developed in course of time into a religious one, and the hero of the story was conceived as an avatar. The Alwars had sung of the hero in their soul-stirring hymns. The pietistic school, which flourished in the eleventh century had later, embellished the story and expounded it in a vivid, conversational style".[2]

Professor Vaiyapuri Pillai, Sami Chidambaranar and various other Tamil Scholars are of the considered opinion that there was a complete Ramayanam in Tamil much earlier to Kambar in the free verse form, which is not now available like various other works before and after Tolkappiyam.[3]

The earliest reference that is available today, is in one of the 'Ettutthohai' works. In Kalitthohai,[4] otherwise known as

2. 'Kamban Kaviyam' — Prof. S. Vaiyapuri Pillai, pp. 152-153.

3. 'Kamban Kanda Tamizhaham' — Sami Chidambaranar, p. 20.

4. This work is supposed to have been compiled by a poet Nal-Anduvanar. It contains one hundred and fifty long and short stanzas in the Kali metre. The theme of the work is generally love, but also contains very many moral maxims. It also describes about several strange marriage customs which were prevalent in those times.

'Kurungalitthohai' or 'Kali', it is said that Ravana had 'heads double of five' in number, that he was the king of Rakshasas, that he was so strong as to try to lift with his ornamented hands the bow-like high Himalayas above which were seated the thick tufted Lord Shiva and Uma, but could not do so, and that he repented over his high-handed action and was caught under the mountain.[5]

The next reference is in Ahananuru, also known as 'Nedunthohai' or 'Aham', which is a valuable anthology of the poems of one hundred and forty five poets, believed to have been compiled by one Rudrasarman under the patronage of the Pandian kings. It contains four hundred and one stanzas varying from thirteen to thirty-one lines in 'ahaval' metre. The theme is generally love. One of the hundred and forty-five poets whose poems are found in Ahananuru, has made specific mention of the story of Ramayana and Rama himself. It states that Rama decided to wage war against Ravana and marched on towards Lanka with all his forces and councillors through the Pandya Country noted for masters of archery, and that at the southern most beach of the peninsula under a big banyan tree with very many offshoots hanging down and fastening the earth, Rama was in deep counsel with other leaders of his army. The birds amidst the branches of the banyan tree went on creating a huge noise, making it impossible for Rama to carry on his discussions. Hence Rama stopped for a while till silence was restored and thereafter carried on his discussions.[6]

This clearly discloses the spread of the story of Ramayana in those times. These lines, while indirectly hitting at the abduction of Sita by Ravana of Lanka and the war between Rama and Ravana, show that Ramayana was so prevalent in those days, that this subtle incident was used by the poet of that time to bring home his idea to his readers.

The other work which refers to the story of Ramayana is 'Purananuru', otherwise known as 'Purappattu' or 'Puram', which is a memorable collection of 400 stanzas. It speaks of the history of ancient Tamil civilization. The theme is war and matters of state. The poets are ascribed to the period of the three Sangams. One bears the name Vanmikiyar and another Poihaiyar, the former

5. Kalitthohai — Stanza 38.
6. Ahananuru — 1-70.

resembling Valmiki and the latter one of the Alwars.[7] In this work, mention is made of Rama, Sita, Ravana and the monkeys who formed the forces of Rama. It states that Sita who accompanied Rama in the fast-running chariot was abducted by the strong handed Ravana, that, at that time, Sita threw down her shining ornaments which were seen by a big group of monkeys with red-faces, and that the monkeys began to wear those ornaments in and out of place.[8]

This reference to Ramayana is made by the poet by way of a simile, thereby showing how wide the influence of the story was among the people and the scholars alike in the days earlier to the Sangam age. Similar references to the story of Ramayana are found in several other places in Sangam works. In Tirukkural, one of the works under 'Pathinen-Kil-Kanakku', a pointed reference has been made to an episode of great importance of Ramayana. Tiruvalluvar says stressing the greatness of Righteousness that the power of right conduct over the wrong can well be seen in the consequence of the action of Indra.[9] The obvious reference is to the story of Ahalya who was given salvation by Rama on his way to Mithila after successfully guarding the sacrifices of Vishwamitra. This shows that the story of Ramayana, and even its episodes, had got into the root of the minds of the Tamil poets and people alike.

Tamil Epics: The Sangam period is followed by the age of epic with its magnificent 'Aym-Perum-Kappiyam'—the Five Major Epics—which are Chilappathiharam, Manimehalai, Jivaha Chintamani, Valayapathi, and Kundalakesi, representing as it were the five main ornaments of the 'Tamil Anangu' or 'Tamil Muse', viz., the tinkling anklet, the gem-studded-waist-girdle, the gem on the chaplet, the bangles and ear-pendants respectively. Of these five, the last two have been totally lost. The remaining three, however, contain abundant material to prove the singular place occupied by the story of Ramayana at that time.

Chilappathiharam: The most specific reference is in the seventh chapter of the Second Part of Chilappathiharam. The poet Elangovadihal, the celebrated saintly brother of the then

7. 'Kamba Ramayanam — A Study' — V. V. S. Aiyar, p. XLI (Introduction).
8. 'Purananuru' — Stanza 378.
9. 'Tirukkural' — Kural 25.

Chera king,[10] describes in infatuating terms the greatness of 'Tirumal' (Vishnu) who took several incarnations for the good of the people. While narrating the greatness of Krishnavatara in great detail and also of Vamanavatara, the poet has given due place to Ramavatara in his monumental epic. He asks, "Of what use is that ear which has not heard the story of Ramayana wherein Tirumal as Rama, the brave, with his younger brother Lakshmana, went to the forest reddening his lotus-feet which measured the three worlds in but two steps, placing the third on the head of King Mahabali, bridged the ocean and killed Ravana together with the other rakshasas and destroyed the whole of Lanka?"[11] This description brings out the superb greatness of the whole of Ramayana and its appeal.

In Chilappathiharam, the poet likens the grief of the people of Kavirippoom-Pattinam at the departure of the hero and the heroine-Kovalan and Kannahi—from their home town to that of the people of Ayodhya, when Rama and Sita leave for the dense forest. This shows clearly the intense feeling the poet, as a representative of the people, had for the separation of Rama and Sita from Ayodhya, thereby identifying the incident with that of his own Tamil epic.[12]

When Kovalan was in misforune, the poet, through the mouth of one Kaundiyadihal, reminds us of Rama, the Creator of Brahma himself, enduring severer troubles when he went to the forest with his wife Sita to keep the words of his father, and suffering the pangs of separation from his wife, and enquires, "Is it not an ancient story?"[13] This clearly shows the influence of Ramayana on the poet even to the extent of infusing courage in the disheartened Kovalan himself. The last words are 'Nedumozhi Andro' which bespeaks the ancient character of Ramayana.

Describing the war of king Cheran-Chenguttuvan with Kanahan and Vijayan, the poet says that all great wars of the past lasted for different units of time, but all were in terms of eighteen. The Deva-Asura war took eighteen years, Rama-Ravana war eighteen months, Pandava-Kaurava war eighteen days

10. King Chenkuttuvan of about 90 A.D. 'Tamil Literature' (M. S. Poornalingam Pillai, p. 117).

11. 'Chilappathiharam' — Madurai-k-kandam — Aaichiyarkuravai — 35.

12. *Ibid.*, (2-3-64 and 65).

13. *Ibid.*, (2-4-46 to 49).

and Chenguttuvan—Kanaha-Vijayan war took eighteen 'nalihas', sixty nalihas being equal to a day.[14] This statement shows the unique position of Ramayana amongst the various stories as one of the approved great classics of Tamil people.

Manimehalai: This epic which is really a sequel to Chilapathiharam contains references to the story of Ramayana in more than one place. This was written by Cheetthalai Chatthanar, a contemporary of Ilango Adihal. This work narrates the adventures of the heroine Manimehalai, born to Kovalan and his lady-love Madavi, who got converted into a Buddhist Bhikshuni (nun). The chief reference in this work is about the bridging of the gulf between Rameswaram and Lanka, wherein the poet has brought the previous story also significantly. Manimehalai states that Nediyon (Tirumal—Maha Vishnu) got angry with Ravana at his atrocities and hence his incarnation as Rama, bridging the ocean and killing Ravana to bring back his wife Sita. The monkeys carried big rocks and threw them into the ocean which was a hindrance.[15]

Again, the poet, in another place, refers clearly to the success of Rama and the defeat of Ravana the unscrupulous.[16]

Thus Manimehalai also speaks of the deep impact of Ramayana on the Tamil society of its time.

Jivaha Chinthamani: This is purely a Jaina work, and occupies a significant place in the evolution of the technique of Tamil epics. It is supposed to be a work of the 4th or 5th century A.D. "There is a tradition current", says Poornalingam Pillai, "that Kamban's Ramayanam owes much of its excellence and many of its beauties to this memorable Epic".[17] Though specific references to Ramayana are not found in this epic, its style, chaste diction and sublime poetry have evidently attracted the attention of Kambar, and thus Jivaha Chinthamani is taken as a great source work for the style of Kamba Ramayanam.[18]

Alwars: While tracing the story of Ramayana in the history of the subsequent Tamil Literature, we come to the hymns of

14. *Ibid.*, (3-4-7 to 10).
15. 'Manimehalai' (9-12).
16. *Ibid.*, (53-54).
17. 'Tamil Literature'—M. S. Poornalingam Pillai, p. 127.
18. Detailed comparison of both the works will follow later.

Alwars and Nayanmars, the Vaishnava and Shaiva Saints respectively, both of whom were practically contemporaries and hailed roughly between the 6th and 9th century A.D.

The story of Ramayana, as is but natural, was adopted by all the Alwars to a greater or lesser extent in accordance with their own outpourings which have been collected in 'Nalayirapprabandam' i.e., a compliation of 4,000 hymns, and is known as 'Dravidopanishad'. All the Alwars took Rama and Krishna as the incarnations of Vishnu and were engrossed in deep devotion to them. A later commentator, Peria Vachan Pillai has brought out a Ramayana by name 'Pasurappadi Ramayanam' consisting of lines and words from the Nalayirapprabandam only. This Pasurappadi Ramayanam gives in a nutshell, all the important incidents in the story of Ramayana as shown below:

BALA KANDAM

Name of Alwar		*Name of work*		*Reference*
Tirumangai	..	Peria Tirumozhi	..	3.10:1
Nammalwar	..	Tiruvaimozhi	..	2.8:4
”	..	”	..	10.9:11
”	..	”	..	4.5:1
”	..	”	..	1.1:1
Tirumangai	..	Peria Tirumozhi	..	11.8:8
Nammalwar	..	Tiruvaimozhi	..	5.1:9
”	..	”	..	10.7:5
Tirumangai	..	Peria Tirumozhi	..	7.8:6
Nammalwar	..	Tiruvaimozhi	..	10.1:8
Tirumangai	..	Peria Tirumozhi	..	5.7:7
Kulaseharar	..	Perumal Tirumozhi	..	1:10
”	..	”	..	10:1
”	..	”	..	9:3
”	..	”	..	10:11
”	..	”	..	10:2
Tirumangai	..	Peria Tirumozhi	..	3.10:1
Kulaseharar	..	Perumal Tirumozhi	..	10:2
Tirumangai	..	Peria Tirumozhi	..	4.1:8
Nammalwar	..	Tiruvaimozhi	..	6.2:10
Kulaseharar	..	Perumal Tirumozhi	..	10:3
”	..	”	..	9:9
”	..	”	..	10:8
”	..	”	..	9:1

AYODHYA KANDAM

Name of Alwar	*Name of work*	*Reference*
Perialwar	Perialwar Thirumozhi	2:1:8
"	"	3.10:3
"	"	3.9:4
"	"	4.8:4
"	"	3.10:3
Kulaseharar	Peria Tirumozhi	9:2
Perialwar	Perialwar Thirumozhi	4.8:4
Kulaseharar	Peria Tirumozhi	9:2
"	"	9:7
Tirumangai	Peria Tirumozhi	11.5:1
Kulaseharar	Perumal Tirumozhi	9:2
Nammalwar	Tiruvaimozhi	8.3:3
Tirumangai	Peria Tirumozhi	1.5:1
Kulaseharar	Perumal Tirumozhi	10:4
Tirumangai	Peria Tirumozhi	3.2:2
Kulaseharar	Perumal Tirumozhi	9:3
Perialwar	Perialwar Thirumozhi	3.10:6
Kulaseharar	Perumal Tirumozhi	9:11
"	"	9:8
"	"	9.10
Nammalwar	Tiruvaimozhi	10.6:5
Perialwar	Perialwar Thirumozhi	3.10:5
Tirumangai	Peria Tirumozhi	6.5:3
Kulaseharar	Perumal Tirumozhi	9:7
Perialwar	Perialwar Thirumozhi	3.10:5
"	"	4.9:1
"	"	2.1:8
"	"	4.9:1

ARANYA KANDAM

Tirumangai	Peria Tirumozhi	10.2:3
"	"	8.5:4
Kulaseharar	Perumal Tirumozhi	10:2
Tirumangai	Chiria Thirumadal	24
Perialwar	Perialwar Thirumozhi	3.10:3
Tirumangai	Peria Tirumozhi	3.4:6
Kulaseharar	Perumal Tirumozhi	10:5
Tirumangai	Peria Tirumadal	145
"	Chiria Thirumadal	39
"	"	40
Kulaseharar	Perumal Tirumozhi	10:5
Tirumangai	Peria Tirumozhi	3.9:4
"	"	4.7:7
"	"	11.4:7

Name of Alwar		*Name of work*		*Reference*
Tirumazhisai	..	Tiruchandaviruttam	..	53
Tirumangai	..	Peria Tirumadal	..	112
"	..	"	..	13
"	..	Peria Tirumozhi	..	5.7:7
"	..	"	..	6.3:5
"	..	"	..	10.2:4
"	..	"	..	10.2:3
"	..	"	..	10.2:5
Perialwar	..	Perialwar Thirumozhi	..	3.10:4
Nammalwar	..	Tirukkuruntandaham	..	19
Tirumangai	..	Peria Tirumozhi	..	11.4:7
Kulaseharar	..	Perumal Tirumozhi	..	10:6
Nammalwar	..	Tiruvaimozhi	..	7.2:1
Perialwar	..	Perialwar Thirumozhi	..	3.6:4
Tirumangai	..	Peria Tirumozhi	..	2.10:5
		KISHKINDHA KANDAM		
Kulaseharar	..	Perumal Tirumozhi	..	10:6
Nammalwar	..	Tiruvaimozhi	..	1.5:6
Tirumangai	..	Peria Tirumozhi	..	4.6:3
Perialwar	..	Perialwar Thirumozhi	..	3.10:8
Perialwar	..	Tiruppallandu	..	9
Kulaseharar	..	Perumal Tirumozhi	..	10:11
Nammalwar	..	Tiruvaimozhi	..	1.5:8
"	..	"	..	9.7:6
		SUNDARA KANDAM		
Perialwar	..	Perialwar Thirumozhi	..	3.10:11
Tirumangai	..	Peria Tirumozhi	..	10.2:6
"	..	"	..	10.2:5
Perialwar	..	Perialwar Thirumozhi	..	3.10:10
"	..	"	..	3.10:1
"	..	"	..	3.10:2
"	..	"	..	3.10:3
"	..	"	..	3.10:4
"	..	"	..	3.10:5
"	..	"	..	3.10:6
"	..	"	..	3.10:7
"	..	"	..	3.10:8
"	..	"	..	3.10:10
"	..	"	..	3.10:9
Kulaseharar	..	Perumal Tirumozhi	..	10:11
Tirumangai	..	Peria Tirumozhi	..	8.5:7
"	..	"	..	10.2:6
Nammalwar	..	Tirunedundandaham	..	29
"	..	Tirukkuruntandaham	..	15

Name of Alwar	*Name of work*	*Reference*
	YUDDHA KANDAM	
Tirumangai ..	Peria Tirumozhi ..	6.10:6
„ ..	„ ..	8.6:4
Perialwar ..	Perialwar Thirumozhi ..	4.1:3
Tirumangai ..	Peria Tirumozhi ..	6.8:5
Nammalwar ..	Tiruvaimozhi ..	7.6:9
Kulaseharar ..	Perumal Tirumozhi ..	10:7
Tirumangai ..	Peria Tirumozhi ..	8.6:4
Kulaseharar ..	Perumal Tirumozhi ..	8:8
„ ..	„ ..	10:7
Tirumangai ..	Chiria Thirumadal ..	26
„ ..	Peria Tirumozhi ..	11.4:7
„ ..	„ ..	10.2:5
„ ..	„ ..	10.3:2
Tirumangai ..	Peria Tirumozhi ..	4.8:5
„ ..	„ ..	10.3:1
„ ..	„ ..	3.9:5
Andal ..	Tiruppavai ..	4
Tirumazhisai ..	Tiruchandaviruttam ..	56
Tirumangai ..	Peria Tirumozhi ..	2.10:8
Tirumazhisai ..	Nanmuhan Tiruvandadi ..	42
Poihayalwar ..	Mudal Tiruvandadi ..	52
Tirumazhisai ..	Tiruchandaviruttam ..	87
Nammalwar ..	Tiruvaimozhi ..	10.9:3
Tirumangai ..	Peria Tirumozhi ..	1.4:7
„ ..	„ ..	1.2:4
Nammalwar ..	Tiruvaimozhi ..	6.9:3
Tirumangai ..	Peria Tirumozhi ..	6.8:5
Perialwar ..	Perialwar Thirumozhi ..	3.10:8
„ ..	„ ..	3.10:4
Kulaseharar ..	Perumal Tirumozhi ..	10:1
Nammalwar ..	Tiruviruttam ..	21
Kulaseharar ..	Perumal Tirumozhi ..	6:9
Nammalwar ..	Tiruvaimozhi ..	8.4:7
„ ..	Tiruvasiriyam ..	1
„ ..	Tiruviruttam ..	21
Tirumangai ..	Peria Thirumozhi ..	2.3:7
Nammalwar ..	Tiruvaimozhi ..	9.2:1
Tirumazhisai ..	Tiruchandaviruttam ..	57
Perialwar ..	Perialwar Thirumozhi ..	3.10:9
Andal ..	Tiruppavai ..	23
Nammalwar ..	Tiruvaimozhi ..	4.5:1

Thus Pasurappadi Ramayanam, as compiled by Peria Vachan Pillai, closes with Yuddha Kandam. This is enough to prove that the complete story of the original Ramayana finds place in the Nalayirapprabandham of Alwars. Poornalingam Pillai says:

> "The Vishnu cult was developed in South India by the Alwars, who sang his praises and spread his worship. The Ramayana and the Mahabharata, the Bhagavata and the Vishnu Puranas, describing the wonderful feats of the various incarnations of Vishnu as Rama and Krishna, were founts of inspiration for the works of the Alwars or 'men of deep wisdom'. The hymns sung by them were collected and ordered and put together by St. Nathamuni into one volume, entitled the 'Nalayira-Prabandham' or 'the Book of Four Thousand Hymns' which came to be regarded by the Tamil Vaishnavas as sacred as the Vedas".[19]

Out of the twelve Alwars, Kulasehara Perumal, the Royal Alwar of Chera Country, has given a short sketch of the complete Ramayana in eleven stanzas.[20]

Perialwar has sung in ten stanzas the first meeting of Hanuman and Sita at Ashoka Vana, and Sita's recognising him as one coming from Rama himself by the words of Hanuman and his giving her the ring of Rama.[21]

Tirumangai Alwar has given in 20 stanzas the descriptions of Kabandhan, Viradhan, Vali and of Shoorpanakha with an original narration of the defeated rakshasas begging Rama himself for rescue. Rama explains to them the fault of Ravana and frees them from fear.[22] The chief feature of Tirumangai Alwar's treatment of Ramayana is that he imagines himself to be Sita loving Rama before the breaking of the bow.[23]

Excluding these Alwars, other Alwars also have sung the glory of Rama in sweet words, referring to an incident of his life

19. 'Tamil Literature'—M. S. Poornalingam Pillai, p. 181.

20. This portion is the 10th Padiham of the works of Kulashehara Alwar called 'Perumal Tirumozhi'. Kulashehara Alwar was a Chera King of the 9th century A.D., who devoted his later life completely to the worship of Rama. See 'Kulashehara Alwar and Raskhan'—S. Shankar Raju Naidu, Annals of Oriental Research, No. XIV, 1958, University of Madras.

21. This is the 10th Tirumozhi of Perialwar called 'Perialwar Tirumozhi'.

22. This forms the second and third Tirumozhi in the 10th part of the works of Tirumangai Alwar called 'Peria Tirumozhi'.

23. Tirumangai Alwar's 'Tirunedunthandaham'—Stanza 21.

as such or as a simile, or as an occasion to express certain views to evoke devotion towards Vishnu.

Nayanmars: Near about the same period (6th to the 9th century A.D.) flourished the Shaiva saints 'Nayanmars' who "preached bhakti and piety by working miracles with the help of their gods, and defeated the Buddhists and Jain missionaries in open religious debates".[24] In the hymns of these Shaivacaryas, though Ramayana is not the story of their chief deity, references to Ramayana are found in various places. These references do not go to depict the greatness of Rama, but help in expressing their adoration to their chief deity Shiva himself.

The Saint Tirunavukkarasar (Appar) in his 'Sri Kailayam Nerisai' deals with "Ravana and mount Kailasa, his aerial plane, his attempt to lift the mount, his groan under the Lord's toe, his strong will, his Veena play and reward of Divine Grace".[25] Again, while describing the greatness of Rameshwaram, Appar refers to the story of Ramayana in several places bringing therein certain chief incidents. They are as follows:

(a) Rama in order to enter Lanka, bridged the gulf by putting huge rocks into the ocean, and achieved success in his attempt.[26]

(b) Rama killed those rakshasas who had big physical bodies but were lacking in noble qualities.[27]

(c) Ravana who wore diamond studded crown resembling hills, was killed by Rama together with the whole lot of Rakshasas.[28]

Tirujnana Sambandar in his 'Tiru Rameswaram' has given very significant references to the story of Ramayana. A few of them are the following:

(a) While Sita was in a cottage at Panchavati, she longed for a deer which was Mareecha in disguise. Rama chased and

24. 'Tamil Literature' — M. S. Poornalingam Pillai, p. 154.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 168.
26. Tirunavukkarasar Thevaram — Tirurameshwaram (Fourth Tirumarai) — Stanza No. 3.
27. *Ibid.*, Stanza No. 4.
28. *Ibid.*, Stanza No. 11.

killed the deer and finally Ravana too who abducted Sita through foul play.[29]

(b) Rama bridged that great waving ocean surrounding Lanka and made a pathway to reach the island.[30]

(c) The following statement is found: Oh! Lord Shiva! who pressed the mount Kailasa on the shoulders of Ravana, the king of Lanka, which is surrounded by the waving ocean.[31]

So also Sundaramurthi Swamihal, the last of the three Tevaram hymnists, has spoken of Rama (as a devotee of Shiva) as one who cut off all the twenty mighty hands of Ravana, the king of Lanka with strong chariots.[32]

Sundarar and several other Shaiva Saints have woven the story of Ramayana in their works, but with the purpose of exalting the glory of their Lord Siva.

After the period of Alwars and Nayanmars follows the age of 'Literary Revival' which gives us Kambar and his monumental Ramayanam—the crown of the Tamil Literature.

(ii) *A brief survey of Ramayana before Tulasidas in Hindi Literature*:

Ramayana has been wide spread in the Hindi area since the origin of the Hindi literature. It is interwoven practically in all the major works from the earliest period. As Hindi belongs to the 'Satam' group of the Indo-European family of languages with Sanskrit as a fore-runner and eternal inspirer with a great reservoir of Ramayana, Hindi has found its sources to a very large extent in the Sanskrit Literature, and has it interpenetrated throughout its region in the form of individual works and also as references in some works. Ramayana of Tulasidas is the *magnum opus* in the entire field of Ramayana literature in Hindi, as is Kamba Ramayanam in Tamil.

The earliest form of Hindi is supposed to have been manifested in the Shauraseni Apabhramsha, and we find a Ramayana

29. Tirujnana Sambandar Thevaram — Third Tirumarai — Tirurameshwaram — Stanza No. 3.

30. *Ibid.*, Stanza No. 9.

31. *Ibid.*, Stanza No. 8 of 23rd Padiham (1-23-8).

32. Sundaramurti Thevaram (7-3-8), i.e., 8th Stanza of the Third Padiham of Sundarar.

in this apabhramsha literature by Svayambhu Deva who was a Jaina. He brought out 'Pauma Chariyu' (Padma Charita—Jaina Ramayana) in the Apabhramsha language by about the 9th century A.D.[33] It is believed that his son Tribhuvana Deva completed the work by filling up the gaps in certain portions. According to Pt. Nathu Ram Premi, there are 90 sandhis in the work and the last 7 sandhis are by Tribhuvana. The sketch of the work is as follows:[34]

Name of Kanda		*Number of Sandhis*
1. Vidyadhara	..	20
2. Ayodhya	..	22
3. Sundara	..	14
4. Yuddha	..	21
5. Uttara	..	13
Total 5 kandas	..	90

Here, the last seven sandhis contain only minor stories about certain characters of Ramayana like Sita and Vali. Swayambhu Deva was a poet of a very high order. He has given expression to the various situations of human life and brought out the human feelings in a realistic manner. In 'Pauma Chariya', the descriptions of wars and lamentations are superb. The fights of Hanuman, Kumbhakarna, Lakshmana and Meghanada, the enthusiasm of the warriors and their march towards and in the battlefield are picturesque. The lamentations of Dasharatha, Rama, Bharata, Ravana, Vibhishana and the women are very touching. The description of the beauties of nature, of love and pangs of separation, and of towns and their belongings etc., has been elaborately offered.[35]

Poet Bhoopati has brought out a work 'Ram Charit Ramayana' by about the year 1285, but only mention is made in certain records of the year 1906. The work as such is not now available.[36]

33. The period of Swayambhu Deva is considered to be between 677 and 783 A.D. by Sri Nathu Ram 'Premi' and 790 A.D. by Rahul Sankrityayan. 'Hindi Sahitya Ka Alochanatmak Itihas'—by Dr. Ram Kumar Varma, p. 103.

34. 'Jaina Sahitya Ka Itihas'—Pt. Nathuram 'Premi', p. 377.

35. 'Hindi Sahitya Ka Alochanatmak Itihas'—Dr. Ram Kumar Varma, p. 105.

36. 'Tulasi Rasayan'—Dr. Bhagirath Misra, p. 71.

Then comes the work of Surdas, the blind poet of Braj Bhasha—the Milton of Hindi Literature—who has sung the glory of Rama and Ramayana along with that of his chief deity Lord Sri Krishna and his life-story in the form of 'Sur Sagar' i.e., 'Ocean of Sur'. This now contains about 6000 songs out of the one and a quarter lakhs of songs believed to have been sung by him. He has sung the chief incidents of Ramayana in brief, now compiled as 'Sur Ram Charit'. This follows genrally the Valmiki Ramayana. The chief feature is that the incident of the boatman is not given in the place found in Valmiki Ramayana but shifted to a time when Rama with Sita and Lakshmana cross the river after they went to the forest, thus falling in line with its place in Tulasi Ramayan. Another point to be noted is the drawing of a line around the cottage at Panchavati by Lakshmana before starting for the search of Rama leaving Sita alone.[37]

Dr. Ram Kumar Varma refers to a poet Munilal, contemporary of Tulasidas, who wrote a work by name 'Ram Prakash'. The object of the work is to bring out the prosody, poetics and other details of style and manner of epic literature i.e., technicalities of versification rather than the narration of the story of Ramayana as such. The same was the object of Keshav Das also in his 'Ram Chandrika'.[38]

Other contemporaries of Tulasidas were Nabhadas, Keshav Das and Senapathi. Nabhadas has composed a few touching lyrics on Rama Bhakti, referring therein to the story of Ramayana. The famous work of Keshav Das is 'Ram Chandrika' with 'poetic technique' as his main object. Senapati in his 'Kavitta Ratnakar' has devoted the last two Tarangas (waves i.e., sections) out of the five to Ramayana and Rama, where the entire story of Ramayana is related in a magnificent manner. Senapati has combined the elements of bhakti and poetic beauty in an admirable way.

The above three are chronologically a little later to Tulasidas. But one Hridaya Ram has brought out in Hindi Kavitta and Savaiya metres a drama 'Hanuman Natak' following closely the Sanskrit drama of the same name. This is a work of 1566 A.D. The language is very lucid and full of poetic art. The dialogues in the

37. 'Sur-Ram Charit' — Ed. by Prabhudayal Mittal.

38. 'Hindi Sahitya Ka Alochanatmak Itihas' — Dr. Ram Kumar Varma, p. 483.

work are very natural and interesting. Dr. Ram Kumar Varma has made mention of two more poets who had adopted the same poetic tradition of Tulasidas. One was Bhagavatdas who composed 'Bheda Bhaskar' condemning Advaita (Monism) near about the early fourteenth century A.D. He was a follower of Vishishta-advaita (Qualified Monism) of Ramanujacharya. The other poet was one Chand who translated 'Hitopadesha' in the Doha-Chaupayi style in the year 1506 A.D.[39] There was another poet, Pranchand Chauhan by name, who brought out his 'Ramayana Mahanatak' in about 1610 A.D. (i.e., 36 years after the commencement of Tulasi Ramayan) in a dialogue form. This work contains more of narration than literary excellence.

Summary: Though no work on the entire story of Ramayana was composed before Kambar in Tamil and Tulasidas in Hindi, works of a minor nature were available in both the languages before their periods and the story of Ramayana had found place in the literatures of both the languages to a considerable extent. The people and the poets were well informed about the story of Ramayana mainly through Sanskrit, and their respective language literatures in general. The field was very fertile for both the poets in their respective spheres and they took to the story of Ramayana as the theme for their main works.

CHAPTER—III

KAMBAR AND TULASIDAS

(i) *Kambar*

(A) *Life and Works*:

It has been a general trait among Indian poets to be silent about their own life-history. Mention about one's own biography was considered to be rather demeaning to their prestige. Even the names of some great poets are not to be found anywhere in their works and we are, even today, ignorant not only of their lives but also of their very names. Great poets like Valmiki, Kalidasa, etc., and the authors of Adhyatma Ramayana and several other works in Sanskrit Literature, Tolkappiyar, Nakkirar, Tiruvalluvar, Kambar, etc., of Tamil Literature, Tulasidas, Surdas, Bhooshan, etc., of Hindi Literature are salient examples for the same.

Kambar's life is still a mystery. Various stories are related about him but nothing authentic has yet been traced by scholars. 'Kambar' is a honorific form of the name 'Kamban' by the addition of the suffix 'ar' at the end of the name in the place of 'an'. There is a story that there was a king of Kambanadu, Veera Varman by name. His wife was Ambika and Kamban was their son.

When the king died due to a foul play of his enemies, Ambika was pregnant. She also died after giving birth to our poet at a Kali temple at Tiruvazhundoor in the Chola country. The temple priest, Adittan by name, brought up the child upto the age of seven. Then one benefactor by name Sadayappar took him under his kind care and looked after him. At the early age of sixteen, he sang the glory of Kali by Her own grace and gained fame as a great poet. Some say that he was the son of Adittan himself.[1]

About the origin of the name there are several versions. One account states that he came to be known as Kamban, as he was a great devotee of Ekamban, i.e., God Shiva. Another says that he used to have a stick ('Kambu' in Tamil) in his hand while watching a field of Kambu (a grain) and hence the name. A third connects him with a caste Kamban. Still another traces his name to the temple flag-staff, i.e., the 'Kambam' near which he was born. Nothing appears to be authentic about his birth and boyhood. This much alone can be stated that Kamban had one benefactor, Sadayappa Mudaliar by name, a very rich and generous landlord of Tiruvannainalloor. He had his education along with the children of Sadayappar accompanying them to the school. As luck would have it, Kamban was blessed with talent and became a great poet. Chola King Kulottungan, came to know of the great genius of the young Kamban and took him as one of his court poets. Sadayappar was himself a lover of Tamil classics and interested in creative work. He and King Kulottunga Chola prevailed upon Kambar to bring forth a Tamil Ramayana, but the work was not seriously taken up by him. So the king ordered his poet laureate Ottakkutthar and Kambar to take up the work and finish it as early as possible. Ottakkootthar took it up earnestly. When questioned by the king after six months, Ottakkootthar produced six cantos. Kambar had not made any progress but to extricate himself from the awkward situation said that he was a little ahead of 'Sethu Bandhanam', and in proof recited extempore a stanza in which he used an unknown word *tumi,* for the currency of which he undertook to point out instances. On his prayer, Kali herself had to pull the chestnut out of the fire for him to the astonishment of all, and Ottakkootthar's mortification. The latter seeing the odds against him, began burning his work. Kambar came by chance to his house and saved the seventh canto 'Uttara

1. 'Kamba Ramayanam'—Vol. I, Shakti Kariyalayam, p. 18.

Kanda' which he later added to his own work. He then really began his work and progressed at the rate of seven hundred stanzas a day, and finished the whole work upto Rama's coronation in just a fortnight. Kambar took his Ramayanam to Srirangam to secure the approval of the scholars. He was asked to get a preliminary approval at Chidambaram which he did after great difficulty. The famous Jaina scholars of Tiru-Narungundam honoured him with eulogistic verses and he finally got the approval of the Tamil and Sanskrit scholars of Srirangam. One Nathamuni objected to the mention of Sadayappar's name in the epic of the divine Rama. Kambar explained that he was his chief benefactor and also that when he (Kambar) was unable to provide him suitable accommodation at the time of the marriage of his son Ambikapati, he had promised him a place of honour. However, the retention of the name once in every thousand stanzas was considered sufficient instead of once in every hundred stanzas as was originally done by Kambar.

Kambar is supposed to have lived for about sixty years. At the fag end of his life, he had to leave his king's court, as he found the capital punishment inflicted on his son Ambikapati to be too hard for him to endure, and, as the king turned down his request to cancel it. He went to Kongu country and breathed his last at Madurai.[2]

The title of 'Kavichakravarthi', i.e., 'Emperor of the Realms of Poesy' was bestowed to three Tamil poets, viz., Puhalendi, Ottakkootthar and Kambar, to the former two by kings and to Kambar by the people. The term is, however, now associated with Kambar only, which goes to prove the majesty and excellence of his poesy.[3]

Authentically, however, it can only be said of our poet that he lived at Tiruvazhundoor and had a benefactor by name Sadayappar.

Kambar's *magnum opus* is his Ramayanam named by him as 'Rama kathai', i.e., story of Rama, and 'Ramavataram', i.e., the in-

2. There is a hearsay that Kambar died at Nattarasankottai near Karaikudi, where even today there is supposed to be the tomb of Kambar and a temple is erected by it where every year his day is celebrated — 'Kamba Ramayanam' — Vol. I, Shakti Karyalayam, p. 28.

3. 'Kamban Kaviyam' — Prof. S. Vaiyapuri Pillai, p. 126.

carnation of Rama, consisting of about 10,569 stanzas of four lines each.[4] His other famous works are:

(i) Saraswati Andadi — which shows his youthful mind.

(ii) Sadagopar Andadi — which shows the mature hand of the poet.

(iii) Erezhupadu — in praise of agriculture and his own benefactor, Sadayappar.

There are a few other works ascribed to him, but appear to be spurious. They are:

(i) Silai Ezhupadu.

(ii) Kanchi-puranam.

(iii) Kanchi Pillaittamil.

(iv) Chola Kuravanchi.

(v) Tirukkai Vilakkam.

Because of his Ramayanam, Kambar was later raised to the height of an 'Alwar' by the learned people and came to be called 'Kambanattalwar'. He is also known as 'Kambanadan', i.e., Man of Kambanadu, supposed to be the name of his place.

B. *Influence of Earlier Tamil Literature on Kambar*:

Dryden in his introduction to Fables has stated:

> "I grant that something must be lost in all transfusions, that is, in all translations".

Commenting on this statement, C. P. Venkatarama Iyer states:

> "But in Kamban's translation of Valmiki, the old story has gained much and lost little".[5]

It is so because it is not a translation, but 'an exceptionally elaborate and original' treatment based on Tamil literature and culture of which he was a great master. Kambar had certainly studied all the important Tamil works prior to his period, assimilated them, and has brought into his epic the essence of the same,

4. 'Kamba Ramayanam — A Study' — V. V. S. Aiyar, p. 32. Kambar is supposed to have finished his epic in the year 1178 A.D. by Prof. S. Vaiyapuri Pillai — 'Kamban Kaviyam' — p. 6. Sri Paul Nadar, Sri T. K. Chidambaranatha Mudaliar and certain other scholars have expressed their opinion in favour of the 9th century A.D. ('Tamil Culture' — Vol. VI, Nos. 1, 2 and Vol. VII, No. 3).

5. 'Kamban and His Art' — C. P. Venkatarama Iyer, p. 101.

even at the exepense of some deviations from Valmiki Ramayana. As Venkatarama Iyer states, "His work is a veritable museum of all thoughts, expressions and ideas found in ancient Tamil Literature".[6] He was not a blind follower of the traditions, poetic or otherwise. Professor Vaiyapuri Pillai states:

> "He was a daring genius and an iconoclast. In his days, the current ideal of poetry scorned simplicity and naturalness while exalting sonorous artificiality. The prevalent taste was morbid, and had a weakness for mere tricks of verse, elaborate alliterations and frequent internal rhymes. These were all abhorrent to Kamban. He made ever new experiments in metre and verse, and produced a harmony never achieved before. He set up in fact a new tradition, which began to find followers".[7]

Tolkappiyam: The antiquity of poetic tradition goes up to Tolkappiyam relating to a period much earlier to the 4th century B.C. It is the first available work in Tamil and is a work on grammar and rhetoric. References therein to earlier works like 'Ahatthiyam', another grammar work, and 'Pannatthi' (a type of metre) suggest that much literature and tradition must have existed long before the 4th century B.C.[8] Kambar is greatly indebted to this work literally and culturally as all the other Tamil poets, for the tradition of all Tamil poets can be traced to Tolkappiam.

Tirukkural: The work that has most influenced Kambar with its culture, ideas and language is Tirukkural. Tirukkural which is treated as the 'Tamil Veda' has been the guiding spirit of all Tamil writers right from its own time to the present day. Kambar, we find, was so great a devotee of Tiruvalluvar that he has adopted in his epic very many significant words and phrases from Tirukkural, which stand apart expressing their individuality. Tamil scholars go to the extent of stating that Kambar wrote his

6. *Ibid.*, p. 94.

7. 'Kamban Kaviyam' — Prof. S. Vaiyapuri Pillai, p. 511.

8. Quoting Dr. Caldwell, M. S. Poornalingam Pillai state, "Whatever antiquity may be attributed to the Tolkappiyam, it must have have been preceded by many centuries of literary culture. It lays down rules for different kinds of poetical compositions which must have been deduced from examples furnished by the best authors whose works were then in existence." — 'Tamil Literature', p. 28. Sri K. Subramania Pillai categorically states that Tolkappiyar lived anyhow before the Sanskrit Grammarian Panini, and Tolkappiyam must have been composed earlier than the 4th century B.C. — 'Tamil Ilakkiya Varalaru', p. 62.

Ramayanam in order to give a picturesque form to the very ideals found in Tirukkural.[9] It would not be wrong to say that Tirukkural is the bed-rock for Kamba Ramayanam. The Tamils swear by Tirukkural and Tirukkural is the life of the Tamils.[10]

Some of the important stanzas that have directly influenced Kambar are the following:

1, 32, 56, 69, 81, 83, 90, 100, 101, 105, 110, 126, 133, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 166, 211, 215, 216, 221, 222, 228, 231, 260, 265, 322, 333, 388, 389, 399, 447, 448, 452, 575, 631, 634, 638, 706, 707, 731, 739, 784, 785, 884, 969, 1100, 1159 and several others.

The works that influenced Kambar include the Tamil epics 'The Big Five' and 'the Small Five'. The Five Big epics 'Aimperum Kappiyangal' are Chilappadiharam, Manimehalai, Jeevaha Chinthamani, Kundalakesi and Valaiyapathi. The first two are original works in the Tamil land, its life and history, based on Jainism and and Buddhism respectively. The other three are translations and depict the principles of Jainism. Jeevaha Chinthamani[11] has attracted the attention of Kambar the most for its style and metre. The others appear to have influenced him in general.

Jeevaha Chinthamani: Ancient Tamil poetry was ordinarily in blank verses, and not in set metres of four or limited number of lines. Out of 'the Five Small epics' i.e., 'Ainchirunkappiyangal'. viz., Choolamani, Udayanan Kathai, Neelakesi, Nahakumara Kaviyam, Yashodara Kaviyam, the first is written in the metre (stanza) style. The sound effect and the flow of these stanzas are of a different nature and appeal from that of the blank verse, and was highly appreciated by the poets, scholars, readers and hearers alike, and as such a new tradition started with this style. These five are Jaina works. Choolamani has appealed to the scholars more than the others because of 'its poetic excellence and use of the fairy machinery'[12] in which respect it closely resembles Jeevaha

9. 'Kamban Kanda Tamizhaham' — Sami Chidambaranar, p. 95.

10. As Tirukkural is an integral part of Kambar, Tamil literature and the Tamils at large, the whole work has been translated into Hindi for the first time direct from Tamil by the author of this work. *'Tirukkural'* in Hindi published by the University of Madras, 1958.

11. Supposed to be a work of early 10th century A.D. — 'Tamil Ilakkiya Varalaru' — K. Subramania Pillai, p. 379.

12. 'Tamil Literature' — M. S. Poornalingam Pillai, p. 142.

Chinthamani which is supposed to be posterior to Choolamani. Jeevaha Chinthamani is noted for its chaste diction, sublime poetry and rich religious sentiments. "Kamban's Ramayanam", says Poornalingam Pillai, "owes much of its excellence and many of its beauties to this memorable epic".[13] Dr. R. P. Sethu Pillai in one of his essays 'Two Great Poets', states that Kambar has added to the beauty of his epic by adopting beautifully the words and pictures of Chinthamani,[14] quoting from it the following stanzas:

Nos. 457, 461, 462, 468, 658 and 1500.

K. V. Jagannathan also shares the same view and quotes the following stanzas.

(i) Words and phrases: stanzas—33, 547, 1565, 2623, 2624.

(ii) Description of incidents by imagination—51, 631, 1366 and others.

(iii) Metres differing with feelings—33, 93, 786, 1376, 1542 and 2316.

Dr. U. V. Swaminatha Iyer also says that Kambar has adopted certain ideas and phrases from Jeevaha Chinthamani.[15]

Professor A. Chakravarti Nayanar states:

> "This great Tamil classic served as an ideal to the later Tamil poets. The well-known poet Kambar openly acknowledges his debt to Chinthamani when he says, 'I have taken a spoonful from the sea of Chinthamani' ".[16]

Professor T. P. Meenakshisundaram Pillai states:

> "Chinthamani exists as Tamil herself. Every later poet has utilised the words and matter of Chinthamani to give a colour to his own work. Even Kambar, the Giant Scholar, has followed this tradition. Which other work than Tirukkural has this greatness? It is in no way strange to find later scholars taking one spoonful—nay, more than one spoonful—from Tirukkural, for it is a work common to all. But it can never be forgotten that the work of Tirutthakka Thevar is a Jaina work. and still even those who opposed the Jaina cult have borrowed from Chinthamani! Peria Puranam of Sekkizhar, which

13. *Ibid.*, p. 127.

14. 'Commemoration Volume: Talks on Jeevaha Chinthamani' — Ed. M. V. Venugopala Pillai, p. 228.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 235.

16. *Ibid.*, Foreword, p. xi.

according to some, came to wipe off Chinthamani itself, echoes Chinthamani here and there! * * * * Kamba Ramayanam is in a way a Vaishnava work but do we not see since a few centuries to our delight, Shaivaites, Mohammadans, Christians and others learning Kamba Ramayanam with pleasure? The person who sowed the seed for this common appeal was Tirutthakka Thevar himself".[17]

Thus it is clear that Tirutthakka Thevar's Jeevaha Chinthamani has influenced Kambar to a very great extent.

Chilappathiharam: Among the other epics, Elangovadihal's Chilappathiharam also has influenced Kambar in depicting the character of Sita in the form of a '*veera patni*'. Kannahi of Chilappathiharam burns Madurai into ashes by the extraordinary power of her chastity.[18] Kambar makes use of this chivalry in Sita when she says that she could burn Lanka, but would not, as her husband is alive (whereas in Chilappathiharam Kovalan is dead) and should she resort to such action, it may reflect on her Lord who ought to rescue her after defeating the wrong-doer. Here Kamban's Sita is born of the Tamil tradition as depicted in Chilappathiharam, when she goes to the extent of saying that she 'would burn the whole of Lanka by her very word'.[19] This aspect of Sita, which is solely due to the influence of Chilappathiharam, is not found in any other work.

After the epics, came the religious revival of Shaivism and Vaishnavism with their Nayanmars and Alwars. These Shaiva and Vaishnava saints have, in no lesser a measure, influenced Kambar, especially his religious concepts. Sami Chidambaranar believes that Kamba Ramayanam is a literary epical attempt to countereffect Buddhism and Jainism based on the Hindu thought, culture and mythology, as was Periapuranam which attempted to reintroduce the long-lost appeal of Shaivism among the Tamil people.[20] Kambar really went a step ahead and tried, through his Ramayanam, to bring in reconciliation as was done by certain great saints among Nayanmars and Alwars, chief among them being Nammalwar. Kambar depicts both Shiva and Vishnu with reverence and tries to bring in reconciliation between Shaivaites

17. *Ibid.*, pp. 16, 17.
18. Chilappathiharam (2-31).
19. Kamba Ramayanam (5-6-18).
20. 'Kamban Kanda Tamizhaham' —Sami Chidambaranar, p. 16.

and Vaishnavaites, which straight-away proves the great influence of the holy sayings of both the Hindu cults. Kambar is supposed to have been by birth a Shaivaite, and a devotee of Vishnu in practice.[21] Thus the influences of both the cults and his reaction as reflected in Kamba Ramayanam appear to be logical and justifying the cause of the society.

As the period of various other works of eminence cannot be correctly ascribed to have been earlier to Kambar, their influence on Kambar is of a doubtful nature. However, as is natural, all the major works prior to Kambar have considerably influenced him, and he has adopted the language, ideas and the poetic tradition freely. Kambar by the dint of his great imagination, mingled with that of the former Tamil Literature and tradition, has brought out the same Ramayana which had been in the country centuries before him in a new garb befitting the genius of Tamil culture and civilization.

Kamba Ramayanam:

It is with this back-ground that Kambar gave us his Kamba Ramayanam.

Though Sadayappar and Kulottunga Chola might have requested Kambar to write the epic, Kambar would appear to have been prompted by his own urge to create such a *magnum opus*. Kambar himself has said that he brought out this work only due to his own personal will and pleasure.[22] Kamba Ramayanam was sung by Kambar primarily due to the condition of the then society of Tamil country and his wish to set it right by the effect of his Tamil composition on the very story of Ramayana which had taken root in the hearts of Tamil people, but had certain lacunae according to the Tamil traditions and culture. His singing was also due to his desire to bring closer the two Hindu cults of Shaivism and Vaishnavism, supposed to be divergently opposite by orthodox people belonging to both the cults. Another cause for the muse of Kambar to exhibit was the lack of a truly great epic like Ramayana or Mahabharata[23]—great both in quality and quantity—saturated with Tamil culture. He select-

21. 'Tamil Ilakkiya Varalaru'—K. Subramania Pillai, pp. 402, 403.
22. 'Kamban Kanda Tamizhaham'—Sami Chidambaranar, *p.* 7.
23. Mahabharata was written by Villipputturar who was a contemporary of Arunagirinathar of the 16th century A.D.

ed the story of Ramayana itself and infused the spirit of the Tamil traditions, deviating from Valmiki and other Ramayanas in several places in plot and descriptions. People believed that those who heard Ramayana, the whole or even a part of it, would follow the righteous path, and the very hearing had the power to eradicate sins. This belief also seems to have influenced Kambar and made him select the story of Ramayana as his basis.

Tamil people of the period regarded Tirukkural as a work reflecting real Tamil culture. For every incident in the day-to-day life of rich and poor alike, not excluding the fields of love and war, court and cultivation, the Tamilian quoted Tirukkural and took the word of Tiruvalluvar as final in speech and spirit. All tried to follow it in thought, word and deed. Kambar, understanding the great influence of Tirukkural on the people who surrounded him, thought, himself being a scholarly poet of the highest order, that it would be in the fitness of things, if Ramayana with its significant appeal, is brought in Tamil with Tirukkural interpenetrating the work where practicable. Kambar's purpose appears to be the exposition of Tirukkural in a story form to bring home to the people the very ideal which they adored and cherished, thereby proving the immense influence Tirukkural had over Kambar.

There appears to be still another reason for Kambar's selection of the story of Ramayana. Rama belonged to the Solar Race, and so were the kings of the Chola dynasty. Among the earlier kings of the Chola dynasty, there was one by name Shibi Cholan who cut off his own flesh equal to the weight of a pigeon which he wanted to save from a hunter and finally threw himself on the pan of the balance. This story is generally found in the Tamil classics. One Shibi is found among the ancestors of Rama with an identical story. Hence some people believe that Kambar regarded Rama also as belonging to the Tamils.

(c) *Influence of the Bhakti Cults—Reconciliation*:

The Tamils originally believed in 'One God' and in Human brotherhood, as is evident from the Tamilian history and literature of the Pre-christian and early Christian eras. They worshipped Him in two forms viz., Protector and Destroyer i.e., Tirumal[24] and

24. We find references to 'Tirumal' in the form of Mayon and Mal in Tolkappiyam which is supposed to be a work of the 4th century B.C.

Shivan,[25] though the land was divided into five types (Tinai-s) each having a deity of its own. However they believed that all these deities were different forces or powers of the same God, the Supreme, with the powers of creation, protection, and destruction.[26] Tiruvalluvar refers to this God in the very first stanza of his Tirukkural which is considered by Tamils as their supreme scripture. The two forms through which they tried to observe God were:

(i) Shaivism with the principle of 'Shaiva Siddhanta' which is an indigenous philosophy of the ancient Taml people, and devoted to Lord Shiva and

(ii) Vaishnavism devoted to Tirumal corresponding to Vishnu.

By about the 1st or 2nd century A.D., the religious sentiments and cults of north India got rooted in the Tamil country, and people in general began to approve of those principles, and the mythological stories began to have a wider and deeper appeal giving effect to the polytheistic beliefs in particular. But the royal patronage still continued for the Shaiva Siddhanta in all the three major kingdoms of Chera, Chola and Pandya in the later 3rd century A.D. During this period of the 2nd and 3rd centuries two specific waves from the North came to South India with a greater vigour than before and they were Buddhism and Jainism. Both took to literature and began bringing out works in the local language to spread their religions. Chilappathiharam and Manimehalai, the two major epics and several other minor works were offered to the Tamil people by them with the ulterior motive of strengthening their own religions. A little later came the Jeevaha Chinthamani of Tirutthakka Thevar, with its magnificent diction and metres. The former two took the stories from the Tamil soil and tried to explain Buddhism, and the third took the story and the very work of North India and adopted the South Indian diction and garb of Tamil language.

However, the Tamil religions once again took the upper hand, and there came the Nayanmars and Alwars with their Shaiva and Vaishnava cults respectively and uprooted Buddhism and Jainism by their literary and mystic powers. The saints of both the cults

25. 'Sivan' according to Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji and various other scholars, is a word of purely Dravidian origin, 'sivappu' meaning red colour.

26. Kambar refers to this very God 'The Supreme' in the very first stanza of his Ramayana.

appealed to the Tamil people by their very life and hymns saturated with true devotion for their respective deities. This was the condition near about the 10th century A.D. Thevaram, Tiruvasaham and other Tirumurais of the Shaiva saints on one side and the Divya Prabandams of the Vaishnava saints on the other, brought the people back to the Hindu fold.

Though in principle, both the cults agreed about the One-God theory, certain orthodox people began to look at matters through the cults, taking their own as a superior one and the other as inferior. Shaivaites thought that Shiva was greater than Vishnu, and Vaishnavaites thought that Vishnu was greater than Shiva. This conflict reached its zenith by about the 11th century. Both took to the Sanskrit Vedas and Upanishads and began interpreting according to their own philosophy, and justified their stand by the commentaries of the same basic works, offering different meanings. Thus in the name of devotion to God (bhakti), quarrels among the Tamils became rampant, just against what was found among the early Tamils who were also worshipping Shivan, Tirumal (Vishnu) and other deities like Muruhan. At the time of even the Buddhistic or Jaina revival, the Tamils had no quarrel to this extent as had the Shaivaites and Vaishnavaites in the 10th and 11th century A.D.

Now appeared Kambar with an open mind. He, with his deep knowledge of the early and contemporary Tamils, resolved to revive the peaceful traditions and culture of ancient Tamils. He imagined a world of reconciliation, thereby giving ample scope to the beliefs of the people and widening their outlook so as to enable them to tolerate the views of other fellow citizens. Kambar is supposed to be a Shaivaite by birth. He determined to take up a story of the Vaishnavaites viz., Ramayana, and gave it a divine colour according to his aim of reconciliation. He began his great epic by showing his reverence not to Shiva or Tirumal, but to the One Supreme God who is the Creator, Protector and Destroyer. At the very start of his epic he strikes the note of reconciliation not of Shaiva and Vaishnava cults alone, but of all the cults leading to the Supreme God who is but One to all.[27]

Kambar has successfully brought out his ideal of reconciliation in many places. He says that many streams start from the same

27. 'Kamba Ramayanam'—Commentary by V. M. Gopalakrishnamachariar — Introduction — Stanza No. 1.

mountain, run through the plains and merge into the same ocean; so also very many religious cults originate from devotion to the same Supreme God, and aim at the same goal.[28] Here Kambar clearly suggests that all sects aim at salvation and atonement thereby bringing the ideal of reconciliation of all religious sects.

Kambar, in his epic, treats Rama as the God-incarnate though originally he was only an incarnation of Tirumal. While describing Rama as observed by the womenfolk at Mithila after the breaking of the bow and before the actual marriage celebrations, Kambar says that such of those whose sight fell on the shoulders of Rama, saw nothing but the shoulders; such of those whose sight fell on the lotus feet wearing the warrior's anklets, saw nothing but those feet; so also was the case of those who saw the long hands. Which of the large eyed-women saw the entire body of Rama? None. They were like those persons of various religious cults who think of God in the form they are able to conceive of Him.[29] Kambar has made his point very clear. He tells us that God is but One, and the deities of the various cults are but different phases of the same Supreme Deity.

Kambar, while describing the Sarayu river, states at the very outset, that the white clouds in the sky look llke the ashes on the forehead of Lord Shiva without much of moisture and when get saturated with moisture by the water vapour of the ocean, appear like Tirumal.[30] Here Kambar brings in the same object of religious tolerance and reconciliation by his exquisite description of a thing of nature viz., the cloud above us which is the source for river.

Kambar had a dislike for the Shaiva-Vaishnava quarrel that was at its zenith in his time. Hence, he tried to put a stop to it wherever possible and practicable. He gives out a categorical statement about this type of a quarrel and its effect over those indulging in it. He proclaims that those unwise persons who talk of either the supreme destroyer 'Shiva' or the Supreme Protector 'Vishnu' who measured the universe and the heaven in but two steps as superior or inferior, can never hope of getting salvation.[31] He teaches that no gentleman should ever speak of one's

28. Kamba Ramayanam, (1-1-19).
29. *Ibid.*, (1-19-19).
30. *Ibid.*, (1-1-2).
31. *Ibid.*, (4-13-24).

own god or religion as being greater than those of others and denounce the faith of others in any way. He repeatedly emphasizes the essential element of oneness.

Kambar tries to bring home to his readers through significant similes the purport of his endeavour. Describing Hanuman as he appeared after destroying the Ashoka garden, the poet says that he resembled the 'Trivikrama Murthi' who measured the entire universe and also the celestial destroyer at the time of deluge viz., Rudra Murti Shiva.[32] Thus he makes his readers think of Shiva and Tirumal simultaneously as one or the different aspects of the same Supreme Source.

Kambar was a poet with a very wide out-look. He was a staunch believer in God, the one Supreme Deity, and wished that all should try in their own way and according to their own faith and philosophy to approach Him for salvation. He stresses this point in his 'Hiranya-Prahalada' episode through Prahalada himself. Prahalada says that the various religions are like the different flowers in a garland with multifarious colours and odours and that their doctrines are like the waves rising above the ocean and merging into the same source.[33] Kambar explains through this statement that all religions lead to the same Supreme God.

When Rama stood alone after exterminating Ravana's reserve forces and killing all the other great warriors except Ravana, he appeared, the poet says, like 'God' Shiva standing alone in the middle of the cremation ground with his majestic and towering personality.[34] Likening Rama to Shiva Kambar emphasises his theory of reconciliation.

(ii) *Tulasidas*:

A. *Life and Works*:

There are three sources from which the life of Tulasidas can be sketched, viz.,

(a) Works of Tulasidas—Internal evidence,

(b) Works of other writers[35]—External evidence, and

32. *Ibid.*, (5-7-46).
33. Kamba Ramayanam (6-3-77).
34. *Ibid.*, (6-30-231).
35. The works that are available now are mainly twelve as follows:
    1. Bhaktamal — Nabhadasji.

(c) Stories prevalent among people about him—External evidence.

The authentic materials are the works, particularly his own. The other sources cannot, however, be rejected in toto. Tulasidas has written too little about himself, as a matter of fact about any contemporary person excluding the sole exception of his friend Todarmal (not the Todarmal of the Moghul Court) about whom he has written only four dohas. He has been practically silent throughout about himself. However this much can be authentically stated on internal and external evidences that he was the son of one Hulasi, born at Soron or Rajpur[36] and his original name was Rambola which later on got changed into Tulasi, and then into Tulasidas. He belonged to a high caste which he himself in distress has stated as the 'family of beggars' (Mangan Kula).[37] He had not the benefit of parental affection as he was not brought up by them. He had to spend his childhood under poor circumstances. Even in his boyhood, he had to beg from door to door and to consider four grains as four purusharthas.[38] He came under the kind care of Guru Naraharidas who changed his name to Tulasi, and heard from him the story of Ramayana at Sookar-Kshetra. He studied religion and philosophy of Hinduism thoroughly from Mahatma Sesha Sanatanji for about fifteen years at Kashi. When he returned, he found to his dismay no member of his family. He eked out his livelihood reading Valmiki Ramayana to people. He married Ratnavali, the daughter of one Pt. Deenabandhu Pathak,[39] to whom he was immensely attached particularly because of her

2. Doo Sau Bavan Vaishnavon Ki Varta — Gokulnathji.
3. Bhakta Ras Bodhini — Commentary of Bhaktamal-Priyadasji.
4. Bhakta Kalpadrum — Raja Pratapsingh.
5. Bhaktamal — Raja Vishvanathsingh.
6. Rama Rasikavali — Maharaja Raghurajsingh.
7. Shiva-Singh-Saroj — Shiva Singh Sengar.
8. Goswami Tulasidas Ka Jeevan Charit — Rani Kamalkunvariji.
9. Notes on Tulasidas — Sir George Grierson (Indian Antiquary).
10. Goswami Tulasidas Ka Jeevan Charit — Baijnathdas.
11. Tulasi Charit — Raghuvardas.
12. Mool Gosayin Charit — Veni Madhavdas.

36. Pt. Chandrabali Pandey believes that it was in Ayodhya before the Babari Mosque — 'Goswami Tulasidas', Sitaram Chaturvedi, p. 3.
37. Tulasi Granthavali, Part II (Kavitavali), p. 228.
38. *Ibid.*, p. 219.
39. Some believe that Tulasidas was never married. 'Goswami Tulasidas' — Shyam Sundar Das, p. 40.

wisdom, respect, culture, education and devotion towards Rama. Once it so happened that she went to her mother's house with her brother. Rambola, due to a fit of great passion crossed the overflowing Ganges in its deep current and approached her at the dead of night. The dutiful wife got frightened and astonished and rebuked him saying, "Don't you feel ashamed to have come running after me? Oh my lord, what shall I say of this? It is utterly contemptible. You love this body of mine which is only a skeleton of bone covered with skin. Should you have the same love at the feet of Shri Rama, you would cross the treachery of birth and death, and get salvation"[40] There came instantaneously a psychological sublimation, and he turned his heart from passion to bhakti i.e., implicit devotion towards God. He went straight to Prayag where Ganges, Jamuna and Saraswati (from under the earth) meet. He took to sanyasa renouncing household life for ever.[41] From Prayag, he went to Ayodhya, where he lived for about four months. He started again and reached Jagannath Puri in twenty five days, and lived there for a few days. Therefrom he went to Rameswaram[42] which is one of the greatest religious centres of Tamilnad and one of the Four Dhamas (Chatur Dhamas) of India, the other three being Jagannath Puri, Dwaraka and Badrikashram. Tulasidas, then went to Dwaraka and Badrikashram and climbed the Kailash mountain. He went to Manasarovar, where he got the inspiration for naming his epic on Rama as 'Manas'. Finally he returned to Chitrakoot and stayed there. He finished his tour of the religious centres of India in 14 years 10 months and 17 days.[43] It is stated that Tulasidas had Rama's 'darshan' with the help of Hanuman who used to regularly attend his discourses on Ramayana in the guise of an old ugly

40. 'Goswami Tulasidas' — Shyam Sundar Das, p. 39 and 'Hindi Sahitya Ka Itihas' — Ram Chandra Shukla, p. 143.

41. There is a story that long after this incident, his wife Ratna wrote to him stating that he was caring for the world, leaving the wife to be cared by none, to which he replied that he got the experience of the essence of love (for the Supreme Being) by the advices of his wife. "Tulasidas aur Unka Kavya' — Ram Naresh Tripathi, p. 96.

Also, 'Hindi Navaratna' — Misra Bandhu, p. 58.

42. (a) 'Kambar aur Tulasi' — S. Shankar Raju Naidu, p. 107.
(b) 'Goswami Tulasidas' — Sitaram Chaturvedi, p. 5.
(c) 'The Holy Lake of the Acts of Rama' — W. D. P. Hill, (Introduction), p. 10.

43. 'Goswami Tulasidas' — Shyam Sundar Das, p. 41.

leper.[44] After a certain period, he went to Kashi (Banaras) wherefrom he visited various other religious centres and returned to Kashi. It is said that once he had been to Delhi and the then king asked him to show some miracle. Tulasidas declined saying that he knew only the name of 'Rama'. The king got wild and shut him in a prison house and ordered that he would be released only after he showed some miracle. Tulasidas prayed to Hanuman in a couple of verses, and there came an army of monkeys and destroyed the fort and troubled the king and his queens. The king ran upto Tulasidas, fell at his feet and the monkeys left the place only after he again prayed to Hanuman for restoration. But still the king had to leave that fort and change his residence. It is strange to note that neither Abul Fazal, the sincere author of 'Aine Akbari' which is a faithful and elaborate biography of Akbar, has made mention of even the name of Tulasidas, nor the work 'Jahangir nama' refers to the arrival of Tulasidas at Delhi and his presence in the court. As such, it is not certain which of the kings of Delhi received him. However, this much may be accepted that he had been to Delhi.[45]

Tulasidas is said to have gone to Brindavan, where, according to 'Doo Sau Vaishnavon ki Varta', he met his elder brother Nandadas. He saw the idol of Sri Krishna with the flute in hand. Tulasidas refused to show reverence to that deity saying that his head would bow down only when the deity takes the bow and arrow instead of the flute.[46] In other words, he would bow only to Rama and not to Krishna though they are the different forms of Lord Vishnu Himself. It is stated that the lord granted his wish and appeared in the form of Rama and that reverence was then shown by Tulasidas.

The permanent dwelling of Tulasidas was at Kashi. It is stated in the biography of a Shaiva Saint Kumaraguruparar of

44. "Professor Wilson in his most valuable and interesting 'Essay on the Religious Sects of the Hindus', gives the following notice of Tulasidas and adds that he had derived it from the Bhakta Mala: — 'Having been incited to the peculiar adoration of Rama by the remonstrances of his wife, to whom he was passionately attached, he adopted a vagrant life, visited Benaras, and afterwards went to Chitrakuta, where he had a personal interview with Hanuman from whom he received his poetical inspiration and the power of working miracles". — 'Ramayana of Tulasidas' — Introduction, F. S. Growse p. xi.

45. 'Tulasidas aur Unka Kavya' — Ram Naresh Tripathi, p. 106.

46. *Ibid.*, p. 43.

Shrivaikundam, Tirunelveli District of Tamilnad, that he had been to Kashi, and held discourses on Kamba Ramayanam in Hindustani, and that Tulasidas regularly attended them and adopted the spirit and certain picturisations of Kambar in his Ramayana.[47] It is rather certain that it was not the same Kumaraguruparar of the time of the Tirumalai Nayakar of the early seventeenth century. This saint was either an earlier Kumaraguruparar, or any other South Indian Saint and a devotee of Kamba Ramayanam well versed in Hindustani, who in later days, got identified with the Kumaraguruparar of the days of Tirumalai Nayakar. It however appears to be certain that Tulasidas heard discourses on Kamba Ramayanam in Hindustani at Kashi by some South Indian Saint.

It is also said of Tulasidas that he was requested by Meerabai the famous royal Hindi poetess and devotee of Sri Krishna, seeking an advice as to how she should live her life. Tulasidas replied in a lyric stating that she should renounce all that is dear to her as crores of enemies, if Rama-Sita are not dear to them.[48] It is said that it was only on the advice of Tulasidas that she left her home and became a *Sanyasin*. It is also stated that Tulasidas once met Surdas, the Blind Poet of Braj Bhasha.[49]

Tulasidas began his *magnum opus* 'Ramayan' by the name of 'Ram Charit Manas' on Tuesday, 30th of March, 1574 A.D. at Ayodhya and finished it in two years and seven months. It is said that a portion of Kishkindha Kanda was written by him at Kashi. Besides this work, he composed at least eleven other works.

It was between the years 1608 and 1628 A.D. that a pestilence spread in Kashi and surrounding places, and Tulasidas got boils over his body, specially on his hand and arm pit. His entire body began aching. He got cured of the disease but he became extremely weak and died on Thursday the 24th July 1623 A.D.

The authentic works of Tulasidas are twelve—six big and six small—each with a unique purpose and style[50] of its own. There

47. (a) 'Sri Kumaraguruparaswamihal Prabandangal' — Kumaragurupara Charitthira Churukkam' — Dr. U. V. Swaminatha Iyer, p. 19.

(b) 'Literatures in Modern Indian Languages' — Published by the Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India — Edited by V. K. Gokak, Introduction, p. 19.

(c) *Ibid.*, — Article on 'Tamil Literature' — Dr. R. P. Sethu Pillai, p. 143.

48. 'Goswami Tulasidas' — Shyam Sundar Das, p. 53.

49. *Ibid.*, p. 65.

50. This aspect will be discussed later in Chapter VI.

Name of work	Date A.D.	Metre used	No. of verses	Dialect used	Prevalent mood	Theme
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Krishna Gitavali	1571	Lyrical verses different intonations (Ragas)	61	Braj	Erotic and Elegiac	Episodes from Krishna's life.
2. Gitavali	1571	-do-	328	-do-	-do	Detached verses arranged in the usual seven cantos, to form the story of Rama.
3. Rama Charit Manas	1574	5100 Chaupais, 1200 dohas and other metres to strike a new note	9900	Polished Avadhi with words of Semetic origin interspersed	All the nine rasas according as the occasion suited	A very full life account of Ram arranged in seven cantos with allied stories narrated in the first canto.
4. Ram Lala Nehchu	1582	Sohar	20	Native Avadhi of Baiswara Distt.	Erotic	Folk songs supposedly sung on the occasion of Rama's marriage otherwise meant for general use on such auspicious occasions.
5. Janaki Mangal	1586	Arun and 24 Harigitika	216	Eastern Avadhi	-do-	Description of the Swayamwar of Sita, the Harangue with Parasuram, and the marriage of the four sons of Dasharatha.
6. Parvati Mangal	1586	Arun and 16 Harigitika	164	-do-	-do-	Shiva's renunciation of Sati, her rebirth as Parvati and their reunion.

7. Ramagya Prashna	1598	Doha	343	Avadhi with occasional use of Braj Formations	Quietistic	Story of Ram is accidental. The book is to be used for crystal-gazing. Each Doha stands for some good or evil and the answer to your question is likewise according as your finger lights on a particular Doha.
8. Vairagya Sandipani	1582	Doha & Chaupayi with two Soratha	62	Avadhi	-do-	Characteristics of a Saint.
9. Vinaya Patrika	1609	Hymns and lyrical verses in different intonations (Ragas)	279	Braj, Bhojpuri & Bundelkhandi	-do-	Hymns in praise of Ram and other gods and goddesses.
10. Kavitavali	1612	Savaiya and Kavitta	325	Braj	Heroic and Tragic	Story of Rama predominantly in Kavittas, with autobiographical references in VIIth canto.
11. Baravai Ramayana	1612	Baravi	69	Avadhi	All the nine rasas	Story of Rama is used as a peg to display the poet's skill in the use of metapor and the nine rasas.
12. Dohavali	1623	Doha with 22 Soratha	573	-do-	Quietistic	Ethical code gleaned from his other works—only 320 verses are new—Several autobiographical.

are several other works ascribed to him, but are not supposed to be authentic. A tabular analysis of his twelve works is shown on pages 82 and 83 as given by Mr. K. B. Jindal.[51]

B. *Influence of Earlier Hindi Literature:*

What has been said of Kambar holds good for Tulasidas also, because his Ramayan too is 'an exceptionally elaborate and original' treatment based primarily on earlier literary works in Sanskrit, Prakrit, Apabhramsha and Hindi languages together with impressions got from his association with men and materials and long travel throughout India from Rameshwaram to Badrinath and Dwaraka to Jagannathpuri. As has already been said, Tulasidas got his material from earlier Ramayanas in various languages. His Ramayan stands as a supreme creation in the development of the Hindi epic writing, nay, in the whole of Hindi Literature, and is second to none. He had a fertile literature behind and his epic excels in religious and literary expositions suiting to the time, bringing out the ambitions of the people among whom he was placed and brought up.

Epic poetry in Hindi is a direct development from the Sanskrit classics. Apabhramsha which is called 'Old Hindi', is the immediate predecessor which prepared the soil for epics like Tulasi Ramayan. The period of Apabhramsha literature can roughly be said to be between 800 and 1200 A.D. Poets of this period were of two classes viz., Court Poets and Peoples' Poets, the former adopting Sanskrit and Prakrit languages and the latter Apabhramsha, the spoken form of the people of the time. Gradually, by the 10th century, the influence of the court poets and the works written in Sanskrit and Prakrit dwindled and the works in the language of the people came to be more appealing. Consequently literature in the Apabhramsha language got better expansion and there was demand for the old matter clothed in the peoples' language. Thus classics sprang up containing the same old matter in a new exposition besides others with original plots and stories.

Swayambhu is said to have composed his Ramayana (Pauma Chariya) somewhere between 676 and 959 A.D.[52] It is the Jaina Ramayana in old Hindi. This work appears to have influenced Tulasidas considerably.

51. 'A History of Hindi Literature'—K. B. Jindal, pp. 58, 59.
52. 'Hindi Kavya Dhara' —Rahul Sankrityayan, p. 23.

Near about the same period, there was the tradition of relating folk tales in the form of dialogues between birds and animals or some story teller and hearer. The following three traditions are noteworthy:

(i) The form of questions and answers between the religious teacher and his disciples.

(ii) The form of dialogue between male and female parrots or parrot and maina or a bird and a man. Prithviraj Raso of Chandbardayi and Kirtilata of Vidyapati are famous examples.

(iii) Conversation between a poet and his wife for which Prithviraj Raso itself is a magnificent example.[53]

The works of this period have generally love-stories with a start from—(a) the sight of the other person in a dream or (b) report of the good qualities of others or (c) seeing the picture or (d) love at first sight, culminating in their marriage.

Another traditional method among these poets was paying tributes to earlier great poets. Pushpa Dant (Puppha yant) the author of Mahapuran, Jashar Chariya and Naikumar Chariya, (believed to have lived between 959 and 972 A.D.) has followed this method. He has paid his tributes in the very beginning to his predecessors Akalanka, Kapila, Kanada, Vyasa, Patanjali, Bharavi, Bhasa, Kalidasa, Chaturmukha, Swayambhu and Shri Harsha. Chand Bardayi in his Prithviraj Raso expresses respects to Vyasa, Shukdeo, Shri Harsha, Kalidasa, Danda Mali and Jaideo therein indicating his simplicity and littleness before them. This tradition has been followed by Swayambhu and is adopted by Tulasidas in his Ramayan. Certain poets have begun their works euologising good men and denouncing the bad. This also has caught the imagination of Tulasidas.

Coming to the style of epics, Apabhramsha poetry in course of time, began to adopt indigenous metres along with the Sanskrit metres, and gradually preference was given to native metre over the Sanskrit ones. Thus there came the Doha and Chaupayi metres and a few others, and poets often adopted this style. The 'Kadvak' style i.e., Doha-Chaupayi form, is an original contribution to the Apabhramsha, which was found to have best suited epic

53. 'Hindi Mahakavya Ka Swarup Vikas'—Dr. Shambhu Nath Singh, p. 198.

poems. By about the 9th century A.D. Doha had become so very promient that it was taken to mean Apabhramsha or the language of peoples' poetry. Even Jainas and Buddhists wrote their didactic verses in this form to preach their religion. Devasen brought out his Jaina work 'Shravakachar' in dohas. Finding the appeal, he wrote another work 'Dabba-Sohav-Payas' (Dravya-Swabhav-Prakash) in dohas, which was later translated into Prakrit. Pushpa Dant wrote in Chaupayis. The same style has been adopted for 'Jasahar Charit' (Yashodhara Charitra).

Sayings of the saints of the Natha Sampradaya are also found mostly in dohas and in Apabhramsha, Gorakhnath being a significant example. The influence was so great that even Hemachandra, a Jain, who was honoured by the king Siddharaj Jaisingh (1093-1132 A.D.) and his nephew Kumar Pal (1132-1173 A.D.) of Gujarat composed their verses in dohas in Apabhramsha. The dohas of Somaprabh Suri (1184 A.D.) and Munj (1304 A.D.) are well known. Thus Apabhramsha had developed doha, Chaupayi and also a few other original metres like chappai, chand, gatha etc.

Now comes the period of the Hindi literature in its Dingal, Braj and Avadhi dialects as chief media of poetical expositions. The earliest small epic work available is Bisaldeo Raso believed to be of 1155 A.D. by Narpati Nalh. It deals with a developed chivalrous plot in about a hundred pages. It is supposed to be the first romantic poem in Rajasthani with a historical hero.

Prithviraj Raso: Now comes the first big epic of Hindi in the Rajasthani dialect by 1168-1192 A.D. It is Prithviraj Raso by Chand Bardayi, the court poet of Prithviraj.[54] This is an elaborate work in sixty seven 'samayas' or chapters giving the various adventures of king Prithviraj. War and love are the chief topics of this work with adaptations of the language suitable to the different feelings and the pictures. The metres adopted are mainly Kavitta (Chappaya), Dooha, Tomar, Trotak, Gaha and Arya.[55] The work is so vast that it is supposed to be the Mahabharata of Hindi. Sir George Grierson has observed:

> "His (Chand Bardayi's) huge poem, said to contain one lakh stanzas, is, if it be genuine, a bardic chronicle of his master's deeds and contemporary history of his part of India.

54 'Hindi Sahitya Ka Itihas'—Ramchandra Shukla, p. 44.
55. *Ibid.*, p. 44.

> The authenticity of the work, as we have it now, has of late years been seriously doubted; and the truth probably is that like the Sanskrit Mahabharata, the text is so encumbered with spurious additions that it is impossible to separate the original from its accretions".[56]

So also C. V. Vaidya compares it with Mahabharata. This work has influenced all the later works in Hindi, specially the epics like Tulasi Ramayan.

Alhakhanda: This has a significant place in the development of Hindi epic poetry. It is a work of Jagnik by about 1173 A.D. It is a work relished throughout North India specially by the village folk. Sir George Grierson states:

> "I do not suppose that any epic poem is at the present day so popular as that of Alha and Udal which is sung by itinerant bards all over Northern India."[57]

'Alhakhand' is only a part of a very big work composed by the poet Jagnik.[58] It is in the Alha metre, and the language is mixed. However, its general influence on later poets cannot be underestimated. Shridhar's 'Ranmall Chand' (1397 A.D.) is a similar epic but its influence is not so great as that of 'Alhakhand'. Here mention may be made of Sandesh Rasak, 'Dhola Maru Ra Dooha' and 'Neminath Chaupayi' which have also contributed to a certain extent to the development of epic poetry in Hindi.

Then comes an epoch-making minor epic, rather a story poem, which paves the way for other great epics like Padmavat, and later Tulasi Ramayan itself. In the history of the development of the epic poetry in Hindi, the sixteenth century is specially noted for mythological and historical story-poems in a new style of Doha-Chaupayis, the number of Chaupayis varying from poet to poet. Though the Jaina poets took to the mythological plots, they did not reach an appreciable level in independent poetic technique and originality in ideas. It was only in the 15th century and later that we see display of the poets' imagination in the construction of plots and full use of the medium of the people. The subjects are mainly love and war which gradually gave room to devotion to god, it being a period of renaissance. The minor mythological story-poems underwent an expansion by gradations finally reaching the height of Tulasi Ramayan.

56. 'Imperial Gazetteer of India'—Vol. II, p. 427.
57. 'Linguistic Survey of India'—Vol. IX—Part I, p. 495.
58. Hindi Sahitya Ka Itihas'—Ramchandra Shukla, p. 59.

Satyavati Katha: Ishwardas wrote 'Satyavati Katha' (1501 A.D.) in Doha-Chaupayi style during the period of king Sikandar Shah of Delhi (1499-1517 A.D.). This epoch-making story-poem begins with the dialogue between Vyasa and Janmejaya in the mythological style, but it is purely imaginary and original. Here, Markandeya Rishi meets the Pandavas during their exile and relates the story of Satyavati marrying a leper Rituvarna, and curing him by the dint of her devotion to Lord Shiva. There are five chaupayis after every doha, and the work concludes after fifty eight dohas. The language is the Avadhi dialect of Ayodhya. Though several earlier poets had adopted dohas and chaupayis for their metre, it was Ishwardas who first adopted this metre of the regular combination of doha and chaupayis in the Avadhi dialect,[59] which was later followed by Malik Mohammed Jayasi for his Padmavat, and several other Sufi poets, and later by Tulasidas himself for his *magnum opus* 'Ram Charit Manas'.

Padmavat: It was in 1528 A.D. that the Sufi story-poems in Avadhi dialect with the style of doha-chaupayi reached a climax. Malik Mohammed Jayasi gave his master-piece 'Padmavat', a romantic epic[60] and at the same time a religious work. There were at least six major works in the same style before Jayasi viz., Swapnavati, Mugdhavati, Mrigavati, Madhumalati, Premavati and Usha-Aniruddha. According to Acharya Ram Chandra Shukla, Mrigavati and Madhumalati are the only two works now available out of the six which preceded Jayasi,[61] but Dr. Shambu Nath Singh feels that Madhumalati by Manjhan is only of 1545 A.D.[62] However an independent tradition of the style of Doha-chaupayi had been well established much before Jayasi by Satyavati Katha, Mrigavati, Nuruk Chand, Chitayi Charit, etc., and Jayasi adopted this style for his work of Padmavat. Earlier, this had been partly adopted in Chand Bardayi's Prithviraj Raso, but it is Nuruk Chand of 1374 A.D.[63] which is the first Sufi romantic story-poem in Doha-Chaupayis. 'Mrigavati' by Kutuban, a work of 1501 A.D., is

59. *Ibid.*, p. 150.

60. 'Hindi Mahakavya Ka Swarup Vikas'—Dr. Shambhu Nath Singh, p. 397.

61. 'Hindi Sahitya Ka Itihas' —Ramchandra Shukla, p. 111.

62. 'Hindi Mahakavya Ka Swarup Vikas'—Dr. Shambhu Nath Singh, p. 408.

63. 'Avadhi Bhasha Ke Itihas Ki Ek Suchi' (Essay)—Sri Udaishankar Shastri, Nagari Pracharini, Patrika, Year 60, No. 2. p. 162.

identical with the earlier works like Satyavati Katha, Nuruk Chand etc., in style. Madhumalati according to Ram Chandra Shukla was very famous during the period of Jayasi, again with five chaupayis for every doha.

With this background comes Padmavat by Malik Muhammad Jayasi who started writing the work by the year 1520 A.D. and finished it near about 1540 A.D. during the period of Shershah, the king of Delhi. Jayasi has spun his plot around the historical Rajput king Ratnasen of Chittoor, his wife Padmini and Alla-ud-din of Delhi, interpenetrated with the principle of his religion of Sufism. The language of his work is pure Avadhi dialect as spoken by the people. He gave a minor change to his style by having seven ardhalis (three and a half chaupayis) instead of five for every doha. This was later adopted by Usman for his 'Chitravali'. Padmavat is not in the ancient Sanskritic style of sargas but follows the Persian 'Masnavi', the descriptions of love and chivalry following the local traditions and thereby appealing to the taste of the readers.

Padmavat has been so catching from the point of view of matter and manner that it attracted the people and later poets alike, and Usman wrote his original work 'Chitravali' in the year 1556 A.D. following the foot-steps of Jayasi. He has not only taken phrases and ideas from Padmavat but also adopted the same setting in metre by having seven *ardhalis* for every doha. Chitravali, while being a love story, contains also an inner meaning like Padmavat of Jayasi. There is a semi-religious content, the hero being a person searching for truth and acquiring an 'Amsha' of 'Param Yogi Shiva'.[64] Other poets like Shekhnabi, Kasimshah, Nur Muhammad and Surdas (a follower of sufism) have more or less followed the same style, thus proving the suitability of the style of Doha-chaupayi for the expression of ideas in an impressive manner and the display of the literary genius of a poet in epic writing.

In the later half of the sixteenth century, there were mainly five styles for writing poetry, viz.—

(i) Chappai style
(ii) Geeta or Lyric style
(iii) Kavitta-Savaiya style

64. 'Hindi Sahitya Ka Itihas'—Ramchandra Shukla, p. 123.

(iv) Doha style and
(v) Doha-Chaupayi style

The languages that were mainly used for rich compositions were two, viz., Braj and Avadhi excluding Rajasthani.

Now comes Tulasi Ramayan with the background of all the aforesaid styles and languages. While successfully adopting all the five styles and both the languages, the poet selected the Avadhi language, his own mother tongue and Doha-chaupayi style for his *magnum-opus*, the Ramayan. Tulasidas made certain changes both in the language and the style so as to accurately fit in with the technique of prosody and poetics and the spirit of the work and ideas which he wanted to convey to the people. Tulasidas used chaste and dignified Avadhi with an admirable admixture of Sanskrit thereby making the language lucid, sweet and majestic. Though Doha-chaupayi style has been adopted by Tulasidas, he sang eight ardhalis for every doha, so that the number of lines may make the chaupayi complete, because four lines go to make one complete chaupayi stanza. Thus the mistake committed by earlier poets not excluding Iswar Das and Jayasi in adopting five and seven ardhalis respectively, wrongly assuming that two lines go to make one chaupayi, has been avoided by Tulasidas for the first time in the history of the works of that style. However, it has to be admitted that Tulasidas was influenced by Padmavat and other works of similar style. He brought out a new form of his own. Like the Sufi poets, Tulasidas also is a story-teller and a religious preacher in his Ramayan. Tulasi Ramayan is regarded and respected more as a religious book than as a literary epic.[65] It may be added, due to its musical style and religious matter, the work has gone home nearer to the people than Valmiki Ramayana, Mahabharata and even Bhagwat Gita itself, not to speak of the Vedas and Upanishads. This is chiefly due to the adoption of the living language of the people and the flowing metrical style. Tulasidas has been largely influenced by the literary and epic traditions in Sanskrit, Apabhramsha and last but not the least, the then dialects of his locality viz., Braj and Avadhi.

Tulasi Ramayan is in the conversational form, and this is so due to the influence of Prithviraj Raso and works of similar type in Sanskrit like Mahabharata, Adhyatma Ramayana etc. In

65. 'Mahakavya Ka Swarup Vikas'—Dr. Shambhunath Singh, p. 452.

Tulasi Ramayan the story-tellers and hearers are more than one, viz.,

(a) Shiva—Lomas Rishi, and Kakbhushundi and Garuda.
(b) Kakbhushundi, Shiva and Parvati.
(c) Shiva-Kakbhushundi-Yagyavalkya-Bharadwaja.

Tulasidas himself has related the whole story, putting it through the mouth of Yagyavalkya to Bharadwaja, as was once related by Shiva to Parvati and which was earlier related to Shiva and Garuda by Kakbhushundi himself. Thus in Tulasi Ramayan the story-tellers are formally three excluding Tulasidas himself who speaks to his people. The three story-tellers are Yagyavalkya, Shiva and Kakbhushundi and the main hearers are Baharadwaja, Parvati and Garuda respectively.

Sanskrit, Prakrit and Apabhramsha mythological works have generally expressed ideals and advices through dialogues between the characters. This has largely been adopted by Tulasidas in his Ramayan, and he has expressed the 'ancient wisdom' and religious preachings and principles through dialogues in apt situations. However, this expression finds place in other forms as well, for example, Tulasidas himself as a poet or through any character without any second person in the form of self-expression.

The paying of tributes to the great was a chief feature in the Apabhramsha mythologies. Tulasidas has considerably been influenced by that form and followed it in his *magnum opus.* He showers tributes to the great, thereby kindling an element of reverence in the readers and hearers of his epic. Tulasidas never gets tired of following this method over and over again. He has shown reverence to all the poets of Prakrit and Apabhramsha who have sung the story of Ramayana.[66] He specifically mentions Vimalasuri, Swayambhu, Pushpa Dant and others who had influenced him greatly. The influence of Swayambhu on Tulasidas in content and style is beyond doubt.

Thus we find the reflection of the literary epic traditions of the time of Tulasidas in 'Ram Charit Manas' in his original settings giving a new colour to the very tradition to which it belongs. Tulasi Ramayan stands upper-most in that line of epics, crowning the entire Hindi Literature. It is the 'National

66. 'Ram Charit Manas'—(1-24-3).

Epic' of Hindus in the words of Grieves, and one of the greatest of 'Literary Dramatic epics' of Indian Literature.

(C) *Influence of the Bhakti Cults—Reconciliation:*

In the sixteenth century, North India was swayed by many conflicting religions and philosophical currents. Muslim rule had already come to stay and with Akbar's new religion 'Deen-Ilahi', forces began to work for the reconciliation and co-ordination of Hinduism and Mohammadanism. It appeared as if there was peace in the country but it was only superficial. The Hindu mind had no peace. There were the two major forms of Shaivism and Vaishnavism as in South India, the followers of each thinking in terms of their superiority over the other. The Siddha cult, 'a decadent form of Buddhism',[67] with Machendra, Gorakh and other saints had its own impression over a certain set of people. There had just appeared the impact of Mohamadanism with its ideal of brotherhood and finer form of Sufism and one God 'Rahim'.

Centuries earlier the Advaita (Monism) of Shankara, Vishishtadvaita (Qualified Monism) of Ramanuja, Dvaita (Dualism) of Madhva, Shuddhadvaita (Pure Monism) of Vallabha and various other similar philosophical currents had spread throughout the country. The country was in a pell-mell and no solace was to be found anywhere.

Two chief trends were working during that period, each divided into two branches. The two trends were Nirguna and Saguna. Nirguna was divided into Gyanashrayi and Premashrayi systems while Saguna into Rama Bhakti and Krishna Bhakti cults. The representative poets of these divisions are—

Nirguna: (a) Gyanashrayi—Kabirdas.
(b) Premashrayi—Malik Mohammad Jayasi.

Saguna: (a) Rama Bhakti—Tulasidas.
(b) Krishna Bhakti—Surdas.

In the early part of the 17th century, Kabirdas, under the influence of Ramanand, gave his fearless teachings to reconcile both Hindus and Mohammadans advocating One-God-theory with salient remonstrances to the orthodox people of both the religions. "He preached vehemently the universal presence of God

67. 'A History of Hindi Literature'—K. B. Jindal, p. 33.

and demanded loyalty to the elemental virtues of truth, honesty and purity".[68a] He also believed in the name 'Rama', not as the son of Dasharatha and Prince of Ayodhya, but as mystic sounds heard while traversing the regions of spiritual heights.[68b] There came a new faith after his name (Kabir Panth), and many saints appeared following his teachings, including Guru Nanak, Raidas, Dharmdas, Dadu Dayal, Sundardas, Malookdas and various others, the modern branch of which is the Radhasoami Faith whose centre is at Dayalbagh, three miles north of Agra.

Kabir and all his followers appealed only to the head, but very little to the heart. It was Malik Mohammad Jayasi and other similar Sufi poets who, though Mohammadans, tried to appeal to the heart also equally and spread their trait of philosophy among the people taking the stories from the lives of Hindus and in their own language, Avadhi. The former stressed the *Gyana* or wisdom aspect, and the latter the *'prema'* or love aspect. 'Reason' was predominent in the former and 'pain of love' in the latter. Though the two sections were helpful in bringing out outstanding literature, very little was their effect over the people, and much less the success in their endeavour to reconcile the prevalent divergent trends. Kabir and his followers tried in their own inimitable way to soften the angularities and smoothen the relations between the Hindus and Mohammadans. Jayasi and other Sufi poets tried to 'prepare the individual for ecstatic experience with intense concentration on the thought of God, the sense of personality gradually disappearing in a trance i.e., losing the individual self in Union with God', advocating that 'even earthly love is a type of spiritualism, a bridge leading to reality'. Both these trends were based on the conception of God as 'Nirguna' or 'God without qualities', Spiritual and Invisible, and their culmination was 'At-one-ment' with God by following the path of Wisdom and Love respectively.

Though these two trends had the supreme objective of 'At-one-ment', they lacked in the completeness of Dharma which included basically the three traits viz., Gyana, Bhakti and Karma, one or even any two of which were incomplete to the Hindu mind, which was thirsty for some concept based on the ancient

68(a) *Ibid.*, p. 35.
68(b) See article on 'Mystic Significance of the Name Rama'—Dr. T. M. P. Mahadevan Commemoration Volume—1962.

Indian Philosophical grounds. The spring of Bhakti or devotion that had sprung up from South India had already reached the North. After Shankaracharya, the scientific exposition of Qualified Monism by Ramanujacharya (1037—1137 A.D.) and his Vaishnava Bhakti cult had captured the feelings of the people there, who had long been subjugated under the foreign Muslim rule. Another exposition of Dualism by Madhwacharya (1197-1275 A.D.) and his thesis of Vaishnava cult had been well received in Gujarat and several other places, following which Jayadeva and Vidyapati had sung the glory of Lord Krishna. Following Ramanuja, Ramanand (1299-1410 A.D.) *had spread his teachings* singing the glory of Rama, the incarnation of Vishnu, and stating that Bhakti towards Him which is approachable to all irrespective of caste, creed, colour, age or sex, is the easiest and the noblest of all for achieving the goal of life. From the South again, came another Acharya who preached that devotion towards Sri Krishna, another incarnation of Vishnu, would be easier still, because of His various colourful merry-makings and courageous actions. This was Vallabhacharya (1473-1531 A.D.), who spread the philosophy of 'Shuddhadvaita' or Pure Monism. He and his successor Vittalnath however believed that it was only His 'Grace' or 'Pushti' which would offer peace to the individual in this life and after. There was again another concept by name 'Dwaitadvaita' or Dualistic Monism of Nimbarkacharya (1200-1275 A.D.)

All these various facets of the same Vaishnavism believed in 'Saguna Bhakti', that is, devotion towards the 'God with quality', the God who feels for the people, graces them, takes incarnations to eradicate their troubles and turmoils, and whom any one can worship in any form of the incarnations.

Besides, the influence of Shankaracharya and his 'Advaitavada' or 'Monism' was there, and also the devotion towards Shiva. Shaivaites also had their philosophy, but did not have any incarnation as had Vaishnavaites in the form of Rama and Krishna. However, the Shaivaites were as much strong as Vaishnavaites. Thus there were Shaivism and Vaishnavism and the philosophical concepts of Advaita, Vishishtadvaita, Dwaita, Dwaitadvaita and Shuddhadwaita prevalent in the country.

With all these religious tenets and systems of philosophy as the background, appeared Tulasidas in the 16th century A.D. He was a *smartha* by birth. He was a disciple of neither the cult

of Ramanuja, nor that of Ramananda.[69] Had he been so, he would have never begun his *magnum opus* Ramayan with praises to Sarasvati and Vinayaka, and would have certainly sung of Ramanuja or Ramananda and offered his prayers.[70] The name of Tulasidas is nowhere found in the genealogies of the various sects of the Ramananda cult.[71] Though he was a Vaishnavaite devoted to Rama, he was a smartha. However, he was the one who saved the North from the Shaiva-Vaishnava conflict, by bringing in reconciliation among the sects. From the period of Puranas, Hindus have had these two major *sampradayas* or sects and practically all the Puranas proclaim equality between the two deities Shiva and Vishnu. But later on, the two sects began quarrelling one assuming superiority over the other, and it had reached its climax prior to the birth of Tulasidas. It was Tulasidas who practically put an end to it. Tulasidas in his Ramayan has categorically stated through Rama himself:

> "Those who make pilgrimage to Rameswara shall enter my realm when they leave the body, and he who brings the water of Ganga to offer in this place shall win that liberation, which is union with God".[72]

Tulasidas pays homage to gods while beginning his work in the form of *mangalacharan*. In the very first hymn he prays to Saraswati, the Goddess of Learning and Ganesha, the destroyer of evils, whereafter he speaks in reverence:

> "Homage to Bhavani and Shankara, Faith and Trust in person, apart from whom adepts see not the Lord who dwells within them".[73]

Here the poet prays to Shiva for the successful rendering of his forthcoming epic on his Lord Rama, and thus stresses his regard for Shiva.

The poet's devotion to Shiva is so great that he craves:

> "If the grace of Hara and Gauri be at all truly with me even in dream, then all the influence I claim for my verses, composed in common speech, will be a reality".[74]

69. 'Tulasidas aur Unka Kavya'—Ram Naresh Tripathi, p. 87.
70. *Ibid.*, p. 87.
71. 'Hindi Sahitya Ka Itihas'—Ramchandra Shukla, p. 148.
72. 'Ram Charit Manas'—(6-6-1).
73. *Ibid.*, (1—Shloka 2).
74. *Ibid.*, (1—Doha 31).

On the completion of the bridge, Rama's heart is full of joy, and finding the lovely spot of Rameshwara, Rama states with a smile:

> "Very charming and pleasant is this spot, immeasurably and inexpressibly glorious; here will I establish the worship of Shiva; this is my fixed intent".[75]

The poet then proceeds further and says:

> "There upon the Monkey-king sent out a number of messengers and summoned and brought together all the great sages. An emblem of Shiva was set, and Rama with all others worshipped it with due ceremony. 'None is so dear to me as Shiva', said the Lord;[76] 'the man who is opposed to Shiva and is called my worshipper can never dream of winning to me; the enemy of Shiva who aims at faith in me is fit for hell, a fool of little understanding.[77] Those who love Shiva and are my foes, and Shiva's foes who would fain be my servants, shall dwell for a full aeon in the fires of hell.' "[78]

So emphatic are the words of the poet, when he expresses the greatness of Lord Shiva. Tulasi's Rama states:

> "To him who with guileless heart and no desire reverences this spot of Rameswara, Shiva will give the gift of faith in me".[79]

Here it is clear that the poet pays much reverence to Lord Shiva. He is of the opinion that the devotion to Shiva will ultimately result in Bhakti to Rama himself. He stresses this point later in Uttara Kanda when Rama states:

> "There is one more cryptic doctrine that with folded hands I now reveal to all. No man can win to faith in me who fails to worship Lord Shiva".[80]

Here again, the poet acknowledges the greatness of Shiva, and says that devotion to Shiva is a step towards devotion to Lord Rama. Rama himself says in Kishkindha Kanda:

> "An enemy of Shiva finds no peace".[81]

75. *Ibid.*, (6-5-2).
76. *Ibid.*, (6-5-3).
77. *Ibid.*, (6-5-4).
78. *Ibid.*, (6—Doha 5).
79. *Ibid.*, (6-6-2).
80. *Ibid.*, (7—Doha 68).
81. *Ibid.*, (4-20-3).

Thus Tulasidas, while respecting Shiva, acclaims the superiority of Rama.

Tulasidas is convinced that his Lord Rama is greater than Shiva and the Trimoorties themselves, for, according to him, Rama is the creator of even the three Supreme Gods. According to Tulasidas, Shiva tells Bhavani:

> "All powerful is the illusion of the Lord! * * * * * * *. When it misleads even Shiva and Brahma, then what of any other wretched creature? Thus pondering do sages worship the Blessed Lord of illusion".[82]

However, the poet places Lord Shiva in equal status also when he states:

> "Mahesha and Bhavani are servants, Lords and companions of Sita's spouse".[83]

But his final emphasis is on the greatness of Rama, and more than that is his devotion and reverence to his name. He states:

> "The name (Rama) is greater than both the Absolute and Rama, and blesses even those that bless. This Shiva knew well when he chose the name from among the thousand million verses of the Ramayana. By the Grace of the name, Shiva is immortal, an auspicious figure in inauspicious guise".[84]

Tulasidas again and again emphasises his view that Shiva is most affectionate to Rama, and that those who do not have devotion at the feet of Shiva can never approach Rama. He says:

> "Those who are not devoted to Shiva's lotus-feet, can never dream of pleasing Rama; a sincere love for the feet of Shiva, is the mark of Rama's votary. Who like Shiva has ever kept his vow of faith in Raghupati, seeing that for no fault in her he put away such a wife as Sati? By accomplishing his vow he proved his devotion to Raghupati, who, my friend, is so dear to Rama as Shiva?"[85]

Tulasidas had the strong belief that devotion towards Shiva was indispensable for the devotion to Rama. When Narada got rid of the illusion after cursing Vishnu himself for not having allowed him to marry Vishwamohini and He himself marrying

82. *Ibid.*, (7—Doha 87).
83. *Ibid.*, (1-31-2).
84. *Ibid.*, (1—Doha 41 and 1-42-1).
85. *Ibid.*, (1-128-3, 4).

her, Vishnu tells him, "Go and repeat the hundred names of Shiva and you will at once experience relief. No one is as dear to me as Shiva; never for a moment cease to believe it. He on whom Shiva bestows not his favour, O Sage, wins not to faith in me".[86]

Even Sharabhanga Muni addresses Rama as "Swan of the holy lake of Shiva's soul."[87] Later he goes a step further and says of Rama as "He whom Shiva cannot grasp by contemplation".[88] Thus Tulasidas's comparative regard is apparent, but he stresses upon devotion to Shiva and the places like Kashi sacred in his name, and states:

> "How can that Kashi not be reverenced where Shiva and Bhavani dwell, as liberation's motherland, source of all wisdom, abolisher of sin?[89] Do you not worship him, Oh foolish soul, who drank the deadly poison from whose burning potence the whole host of heaven was suffering? Who is so merciful as Shiva?"

But he makes Rama himself say to Sugriva, "I will slay Bali with a single shaft! Though he flee for refuge to Brahma and Shiva he shall not escape alive!"[90] Vali himself, when asked by Rama to survive, says plainly before dying:

> "That Rama by the power of whose name Shiva at Kashi bestows on all alike the gift of immortal life, has come in visible form before my eyes",[91]

thus proving the greatness of Rama over Shiva.

Finally, Shiva himself tells Uma, "There is no guru in the world, no father, mother, brother or lord so kind as Rama",[92] showing thereby that Shiva himself takes Rama as the Supreme benefactor, greater than himself.

On the whole, we may say, due to the indispensable nature of devotion to Shiva, Tulasidas aims at the ideal of reconciliation among the Shaivaites and Vaishnavaites, and thus tries to set right the prevalent religious conflicts among the Hindus. How-

86. *Ibid.*, (1-168-3, 4).
87. *Ibid.*, (3-11-1).
88. *Ibid.*, (3-33-6).
89. *Ibid.*, (4-1, 2).
90. *Ibid.*, (4—Doha 8).
91. *Ibid.*, (4-12-2, 3).
92. *Ibid.*, (4-14-1).

ever, his personal opinion was that, though Vishnu and Shiva were equally to be worshipped and offered devotion, Rama was supreme above all the Tri-murtis, and he gave a higher place to Rama in all respects. It has already been stated that he reverenced only Rama, not Krishna and had frankly stated at Brindavan, that his head would bow down only when the idol of Krishna decorated with flute and yellow garment would change into that of Rama with bow and arrow.[93] He was an orthodox Vaishnavite.

His view of God in respect of His being Nirguna and Saguna i.e., Impersonal and Personal, is apparent from the very request of Sati to Shiva: "First consider and tell me the reason why the impersonal Absolute assumed a personal form?" Tulasidas believed in the final impersonal and absolute God, but also in the personal God, as the very embodiment of spiritual bliss. He does not distinguish between the Impersonal and Personal, and gives equal place to both. Offering a detailed explanation with a simile, Shiva himself tells Sati, "There is no difference between the Personal and the Impersonal, so say the sages, the puranas, wise men and the vedas. The Impersonal, Formless, Invisible and Unborn becomes personal for love of the faithful. How does the Impersonal become the personal? Just as water is not different from snow and ice".[94]

In another place, he stresses the same view through the words of Brihaspati, the teacher of gods, to Indra, the King of gods and states:

> "Rama is Impersonal, Undefiled, Infinite and Immutable, yet for love of the love of his votaries has He taken personal form".[95]

Agastya, while describing Rama, addresses Rama himself and states:

> "Though you are the Absolute, indivisible and eternal, comprehensible only by intuition, adored by the saints, though I know and speak of that form of yours, yet I constantly turn back therefrom and spend my love on the Absolute made man!".[96]

93. 'Tulasidas aur Unka Kavya'—Ram Naresh Tripathi, p. 43.

94. 'Ram Charit Manas' (1-140-1, 2).

95. *Ibid.*, (1-220-3).

96. *Ibid.*, (3-16-6, 7).

Tulasidas explains his view in a very picturesque manner, when he states through Rama himself, in the description of the spring season at Kishkindha:

> "Lovely are the ponds when the lotuses blossom like the impersonal Absolute becoming personal".[97]

It is hence very clear that Tulasidas believes in the ultimate Impersonal God but is attached to the Personal also, because that is a manifestation of the love of the Impersonal God Himself. Thus Tulasidas has reconciled the two theories of Nirguna and Saguna and brought in reconciliation among the two divergent theories then prevalent.

Philosophical Concepts:

Tulasidas is of the firm opinion that one should not confound the various theories propounded about philosophical concepts. He seems to accept, according to some scholars, the theory of Vishishtadvaita, while others take him to be a believer of Advaita. Both bring in convincing authorities from the works of Tulasidas, specially the Ramayan, to justify their own stand. However, Tulasidas does give room to both the theories and thereby tries to bring in reconciliation among the various theories and stop the people from quarrelling among themselves, for God is one and Rama His greatest incarnation. So he explicitly states in his Vinaya Patrika:

> "Oh Kesava, my Lord! To explain of you is impossible. Your creation is strange, and one has to only be eternally thinking about it and yourself * * * * * * * Some say the world is truth, others call it a myth and still a few others are of the opinion that both are correct. I, Tulasidas. feel that only he who would leave off all these three delusions, will be able to realise himself".[98]

Thus, here again Tulasidas advocates reconciliation and advises people to leave off their quarrels on these subtle matters.

Summary:

Kambar and Tulasidas had a very humble beginning, born of poor parents and were brought up elsewhere. Both had a very hard and adventurous life. They had their education and experiences covering various facets of human life. Both were

97. *Ibid.*, (4-20-1).
98. Vinayapatrika—Song "Kesava Kahi na Jaaya Ka Kahiye".

born-poets, and enriched their language-literatures with the greatest work found in their respective languages and topped in literary excellence from every point of view. Both had well been influenced by and got saturated with the earlier literatures found in their respective spheres, and moulded out new classics from the same source to suit the surrounding conditions with a view to bring peace and offer aesthetic pleasure to their readers and hearers in their own ways.

India is essentially religious, and both the poets, having taken up an epic of the land which had treated the hero as God-Incarnate, dwelt upon the greatness of the hero to their highest capacity and made him 'The Supreme God', 'The Almighty Lord', from whom all emanated, and tried to bring about reconciliation among the divided humanities around them, mainly Shaivaites and Vaishnavaites, common to both the poets. Kambar and Tulasidas carried with them the spirit of the day and poured out their feelings of devotion to the One-God, the Supreme, through Ramayana and created a common platform for all the people to wash off their differences.

CHAPTER IV

THE STORY—A COMPARATIVE STUDY

Though Kambar and Tulasidas have followed the story of Valmiki Ramayana in general, there are major and minor differences in their narrations. "Such differences we find practically in all the works brought forth on the story of Ramayana, but we find Kambar and Tulasi differing from Valmiki in their plot-constructions and at the same time similar to each other in many such places".[1] Though the general treatment of the story is similar from the religious point of view taking Rama as the incarnation of 'God the Supreme', the development of the plot differs in both the works. Kamba Ramayanam is in the narrative style and the poet himself narrates the entire story, whereas in Tulasi Ramayan the style is conversational, the dialogue being mainly between Shiva and Parvati as found in Adhyatma Ramayana. Tulasidas has also added two more dialogues, one being between Yagyavalkya and Bharadwaja, and the other between Kakbhushundi and Garuda. He is also partly narrative. Here it is worthwhile remembering that even in Valmiki, the story begins in the form of a dialogue between Narada and Valmiki himself. He asks

1. 'Kambar and Tulasi'—S. Shankar Raju Naidu, p. (i)—Preface in English.

about the person who possesses the sixteen best qualities of human virtues, to which he gets the reply from Narada in the form of the story of Ramayana in a nut-shell. This outline envisaged by Narada, has been developed by Valmiki in the Anushthup metre. Two 'Krauncha' birds were 'sporting and singing in their joy of life and love'. A heartless hunter shot down one of them dead. On seeing this sad occurence, the Anushthup is said to have emanated accidentally from Valmiki's mouth. Valmiki thus got the story from Narada, acquired the metre spontaneously and composed the epic at the suggestion of Brahma who manifested himself at that psychological moment. Kambar, as one born of Tamil traditions, took the skeleton of that story and fully utilised the spirit and traditions of Tamil literature and culture and brought out his Kamba Ramayanam in the Vritta metres, himself telling the whole story in the narrative form without the indirect conversational style and acknowledging the source to be mainly that of Valmiki Ramayana.

I—BALA KANDA

Kambar pays reverence to 'God' in a 'Kappu' i.e., Mangalacharanam and describes the River Sarayu. The water of the Sarayu which comes from the Himalayas, is like a mother to the country through which it passes and is the cause of prosperity of the state. It flows through steadily and eternally as are the good traits of the king and the people of the land. It runs into several canals as are the principles of religions in various facets, which emanate from the One Supreme Source 'God'. The water feeds many a tank, orchard, garden and field as the God's rays animate all the creations in the Universe. The river forms the subject of a whole chapter.

The poet gives a vivid description of the Koshala State and all that it contains, in the second chapter. The people are good, righteous, prosperous and possess all virtues without any trace of poverty. There is no giver as there is none to receive in this ideal state.

In the third chapter, Kambar deals with the grandeur of the magnificent city of Ayodhya. The palaces are high, the forts are strong, the market places rich and the whole city musical.

The fourth chapter describes the administration of the kingdom, which serves as a pattern for an ideal state. King Dasharatha was Dharma incarnate as it were; he had no enemies; he

valued the lives of all as his own, treating the inhabitants of his kingdom as his own limbs. His country was as dear to him as the last piece of land to a poor man.

The fifth chapter on 'Inacarnation' commences the story of Ramayana as such. King Dasharatha had three queens. He ruled for over sixty thousand years most righteously. In spite of all his virtues and prosperity he had no issue. He consulted Vasishtha, the spiritual head, over this matter. The latter revealed a heavenly secret to the king. The gods implored Lord Vishnu to relieve the earth of Rakshasas, and He promised to incarnate Himself as a son of Dasharatha, his 'Shankha' the shell as Shatrughna, 'Chakra' the wheel as Bharata and 'Sheshanaga' the serpent as Lakshmana and ordered them to be born as monkeys, the spirits of Brahma, Indra, Sun, Fire-God, Wind-God to take shape respectively as Jambavan, Vali, Sugriva, Neela and Hanuman, the last one imbibing also Shiva's. Vasishtha suggested to the king to invite the sage Rishyashringa and perform a 'Putreshthi Yagya' to be blessed with children. The Yagya was performed and ambrosial drink obtained. The drink was divided among the three queens and as a result were born Rama to Kaushalya, Bharata to Kaikeyi and Lakshmana and Shatrughna to Sumitra.

Tulasidas's method is different. The Russian Scholar A. P. Varannikov observes in the introduction to his Russian translation of Tulasi Ramayan that the main object of Tulasidas in his epic is not the narration of the story (which he presumes to have been very well known to his readers)[2] but the exposition of his own sociological concepts of the Hindu society and its consolidation, following the age-old Hindu traditions of Varnashrama Dharma. He has not divided his seven kandas into sargas or chapters as is usual in an epic, but has followed the Puranic style or relating the whole story, kanda by kanda, with little or no clear-cut sections. He includes in his epic some incidents from works other than Valmiki and Adhyatma Ramayanas. He gives his own interpretations for the treatment of the story. Some minor situations in other works receive elaborate treatment

2. (a) 'Manas Ki Roosi Bhoomika'—Trn. by Dr. Kesarinarayan Shukla, p. 53.

(b) 'Ram Charit Manas'—Shyam Sundar Das Edn. (1-220). This is an example to prove this statement beyond doubt..

while lengthy incidents are disposed of in a line or two. This proves that story-telling was not his primary objective. He adopted the story of Ramayana only to emphasise certain views and principles 'indulging in doctrinal discussions (rather to the detriment of artistry)'.[3] He is more a preacher than a story-teller.

At the very outset Tulasidas pays homages to 'Vani and Vinayaka,' 'Bhavani and Shankara', his own Guru, Valmiki and Hanuman, Sita the Beloved of Rama and "Lord Hari whose name is Rama, to whose illusive power is subject the whole universe with Brahma and all the gods and demons, ... first cause beyond all other causes".[4]

He continues and states, "Now in accord with all the Puranas, the Vedas and the Agamas, which is told in the Ramayana and culled from other sources too, Tulasi for his own soul's delight declares at length, the story of Raghunath, composed in very charming modern speech".[5]

Again, he offers prayers to Ganesha, Vishnu, Shiva and his own teacher, and homage to brahmins and then to the societies of good people, saints and their sects which are like Prayaga, 'the king of sacred places'. He also pays 'homage in all sincerity to the gang of villains who without cause return evil for good, for whom another's loss is gain, who rejoice in a neighbour's ruin and grieve over his prosperity', and then he pays obeisance at 'the feet of saints and wicked men alike; both cause pain, but with a difference; the absence of the former is like the pain of death, the latter torment us by their presence'.[6] Finally he pays 'homage with folded hands to the lotus feet of all, knowing that all creatures in the world, conscious and unconscious, are instinct with Rama'.[7] He also pays due reverence to gods and demons, men and serpents and birds, to ghosts and departed ancestors, Gandharvas, Kinneras and prowlers of the night.

Then Tulasidas expresses his deep sense of humility and incapability to cope up with the work. He says in plain and simple words:

3. 'The Holy Lake of the Acts of Rama', 'Introduction', W. D. P. Hill, p. XVIII.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 1.
5. 'Ram Charit Manas'—(1—Sloka 7).
6. *Ibid.*, (1-15).
7. *Ibid.*, (1-17-1).

"I have no skill at all in any method of poesy; my wit is a beggar, my desire is a king",[8]

and requests good men to pardon him for his adaucity. Still he feels confident that "all good men will hear his verse with pleasure and evil men will laugh",[9] and says, that 'he is no poet, nor is he skilled in speech; all ignorant is he of every art and science'.[10] He believes with all humility in the greatness of his attempt, solely depending on the efficacy of the name of his Lord 'Rama' and states:

"Though there be no poetic grace at all in my verses, yet in them is the splendour of Rama manifested".[11]

Tulasidas expatiates on the greatness of Ramayana as one which will wash off all sins and pave the way for salvation specially in this 'Kaliyuga'. He reverently calls to memory the great poets like Vyasa and those who had written on Rama mainly in the dialect of the people. He expresses his special regard to Valmiki, the four Vedas, Brahma, gods, brahmins, wise men and the Navagrahas, Saraswati the goddess of learning, his own teacher, father, mother, Shiva-Parvati and then "to the very holy city of Ayodhya and to the river Sarayu that washes away the stains of the Kaliyuga; and again I do reverence to the men and women of that city, whom the Lord loves so dearly for he counted as nought all the sins of those who slandered Sita,[12] nay, he reassured them and gave them a place in his own realm".[13] He pays homage to Dasharatha, Kaushalya and the other two Queens, and then to King Janaka and his house-hold, to Bharata, Lakshmana, Shatrughna, Hanuman, Sugriva, Jambavan, Angada and others. He also pays his reverence to all those birds, animals, men, suras (gods) and asuras who worship Rama. Then he expresses his salutations to Shuka, Sanaka, Satananda, Sanatkumara and other Rishis, and to Narada. He prays later to Sita and finally to Rama stating that 'they are truly one, as the word is one with its meaning and the water with the wave though they are distinguished in speech'.[14]

8. *Ibid.*, (1-17-3).
9. *Ibid.*, (1-17).
10. *Ibid.*, (1-18-4).
11. *Ibid.*, (1-19-4).
12. This refers to the washerman mentioned in the Uttara Kanda of Valmiki Ramayana.
13. 'Ram Charit Manas'—(13-32-2).
14. *Ibid.*, (1-34).

He pays special reverence to the name 'Rama' and states:

> "I do homage to Rama, the name of Raghupati signifying fire and sun and moon, essence of Brahma, Hari and Hara (i.e., Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva the Thri-murtis), vital breath of the Vedas; impersonal, unique, treasure-house of all perfections; the Great spell uttered by Mahesa who teaches it as effecting final release at Kashi. Ganesa knows its power, for by the might of the name he is first to be worshipped.[15] Shiva knows well the power of the Name, by virtue of which the deadly poison had the effect of Ambrosia".[16]

Tulasidas like the two letters 'Ra' and 'Ma' as Rama and Lakshmana. His advice is, "If you wish to have light within and without, place the name of Rama on your tongue, like a lamp of jewel at the door of your lips".[17] Then he goes on to describe the greatness of the efficacy of the name at great length, stressing that the name is superior even to Rama himself.[18] He cites many instances one among which is that Rama broke only one bow of Shiva, but the power of the name can destroy all the troubles of the entire world,[19] and that 'Shiva is immortal, an auspicious figure in an inauspicious guise only by the grace of the name Rama.'[20] Tulasi says that it was only due to the supreme power of the name Rama that the great devotees like Prahlada, Dhruva, Hanuman, Ajamil and others became great. He gives an advice to the people of the existing Kaliyuga that 'Gyan, Bhakti and Karma, that is wisdom, devotion and action, can never get salvation to one, and the only way now is the 'name of Rama'[21] and explains by saying:

> "The name of Rama is Narasimha, the Kaliyuga Hiranyakasipu; the faithful who repeat the name are Prahlada; these the name will protect, but it will slay the foes of the Gods."[22]

Then he concludes expressing the magnanimity and forgiving nature of Rama giving two examples. He states that:

> "Sugriva committed the very sin for which Rama slew Vali like a hunter, and Vibhishana too was guilty of the same

15. *Ibid.*, (1-35-1, 2).
16. *Ibid.*, (1-35-4).
17. *Ibid.*, (1-37).
18. *Ibid.*, (1-39).
19. *Ibid.*, (1-40-3).
20. *Ibid.*, (1-41-1).
21. *Ibid.*, (1-43-4).
22. *Ibid.*, (1-44).

crime, but Rama regarded it not at all; rather Raghubir honoured them when they met Bharat and sang their praise in the Royal Court."[23]

Tulasidas feels that 'nowhere is there a master kindlier than Rama.'[24] Then he states that originally it was Shiva who related the story of Ramayana to Uma and also to Kakbhushundi. He related it to Yagyavalkya who in turn passed it on to Bharadwaja.[25] The poet says that he got this story from his teacher at 'Sookarkhet', which he proposes to relate in the very spoken dialect of the people according to his own capacity and wisdom. Then he expounds the greatness of the story which is like Kamadhenu or life-giving ambrosia in this Kaliyuga.

Tulasidas believes that 'there had been several types of incarnations of Rama and that there were tens of crores of Ramayanas earlier in immeasurable length. Great sages had already sung in different aeons and multifarious forms of the story of Rama.'[26]

Tulasidas mentions the date of his commencing the story as Vikrama Samvat 1631 (1574 A.D.), the very date of the birth of Rama that year. He wrote at Ayodhya itself. He tells in short the greatness of the river Sarayu and Ayodhya, and tells that the name of this work, shall be 'Ram Charit Manas' which in the words of W.D.P. Hill is translated as 'the Holy Lake of the Acts of Rama'. He gives reasons for selecting this name for his epic enumerating the similarity in the features of the Manasarovar Lake at the top of the Himalayas to his own 'Holy Lake of the Acts of Rama'. He states:

> "The seven parts are the beauteous steps that delight the soul when viewed with the eyes of wisdom. The majesty of Raghupati, transcending the elements of nature and unimpeded, I shall declare to be the depths of its clear water. The glory of Rama and Sita is its ambrosial flood; the similes are enchanting play of its ripples;[27] * * * ** * * * the nine sentiments, prayer, penance, austerity and detachment—all these are graceful creatures that swim in the Lake[28] * * * * * * * all the other stories and various topics are like parrots and cuckoos and birds of many hues".[29]

23. *Ibid.,* (1-46-3, 4).
24. *Ibid.,* (1-49-2, 3).
25. *Ibid.,* (1-51-1).
26. *Ibid.,* (1-54-3, 4).
27. *Ibid.,* (1-58-1, 2).
28. *Ibid.,* (1-58-5).
29. *Ibid.,* (1-58-8).

He believes that without the Divine Grace of Lord Rama, nobody can come near this lake, and that all kinds of troubles and turmoils will vanish if one takes bath in this lake.[30]

Then follows a discussion between Bharadwaja and Yagnavalkya about Rama who is sung by all saints, Puranas and Upanishads and whose name 'Rama' has immeasurable power. Bharadwaja submits:

> "The immortal Sambhu, Shiva, the Blessed Lord, sum of all knowledge and perfection, continually repeats it, and the four kinds of creatures that are in the world win to the highest realm if they die at Kashi, and that too, O Prince of sages, is due to the greatness of Rama, for Shiva of his compassion instructs them in the power of the Name. I ask you, Lord, which Rama is this? Tell me and explain, O Treasure-house of Grace! One Rama there, is the Son of the King of Avadh, and his acts are known to all the world. He suffered untold grief at the loss of his wife, and in his fury slew Ravana in battle. Lord, is that the Rama, or is it some other whose name Tripurari repeats? * * * * * * * Tell me the story at length, my Lord, that my grievous perplexity may be resolved."[31]

Yagnavalkya in reply says:

> "It was just this kind of doubt that Bhavani felt and then Mahadeva told her the whole story. So now I repeat as well as I can, the converse held by Uma and Shambhu".[32]

Then he relates how Shiva himself got the story. "One day in the Treta Yuga Shambhu visited Agastya the seer; with him was Sati, Bavani, the Mother of the World. The seer bowed down before him, recognising him as Lord of all. The great sage related the story of Rama, and Mahesha listened with the utmost delight".[33] Consequently an immense desire arose in the heart of Shiva to see that Rama. It was at the period that Rama with Sita and Lakshmana had entered Dandakaranya forest leaving Ayodhya on the word of his father.[34] The acts of Rama had gone to the extent of his losing Sita and searching for her in the forest feeling the pangs of separation.[35] It was then that Shiva was able to see Rama and shed tears of joy.[36] The condition of

30. *Ibid.*, (1-60-3).
31. *Ibid.*, (1-68-1 to 1-69-1).
32. *Ibid.*, (1-69-4 to 69).
33. *Ibid.*, (1-70-1, 2).
34. *Ibid.*, (1-70-4).
35. *Ibid.*, (1-72-4).
36. *Ibid.*, (1-73-1).

Rama surprised Uma and raised a doubt in her. In spite of Shiva's explanation she could not understand Rama, and wanted to test him. Ultimately Shiva allowed her to take to her action. Uma approached him in the disguise of Sita but Rama recognised mother Uma and questioned her about Shiva and the reason for her roaming about alone in the forest.[37] Uma felt ashamed and frightened too, and returned to Shiva repenting, but was not accepted by him. Shiva went straight to Kailash, his eternal abode, and resorted to meditation repeating the name of 'Rama'.

Then follows the story of Uma's going to her father Daksha Prajapati's place and burning herself in the fire originally meant for sacrifice. She is reborn as Parvati, the daughter of Himalaya.[38] With the assistance of Narada, Parvati is again married to Shiva.[39] Then after the birth of Shanmukha, the Six-faced, who slew the Taraka Rakshasa, one day Parvati requests Shiva to relate the story of the various acts of Rama,[40] expressing her doubt as to whether the Rama whose name he repeats day and night, is the same as the son of the king of Ayodhya or some other absolute and invincible.[41] She very humbly submits that she is not having that ignorance which she had eariler and that she is extremely anxious to hear his story with reason for incarnating in human form though essentially absolute and impersonal.[42] Shiva replies that she is now perfectly pure in word, thought and deed for the grace of Rama is on her and adds that "the ears of those who have not heard the Hari's story (i.e. Ramayana) are like the holes of snakes' abode."[43] About the Impersonal and Personal nature of Lord, Shiva says:

> 'There is little difference between the two and He assumes a personal form due to love for his devotees.[44] Rama is that very supreme source who ultimately illumines all and also the Lord of Avadh without beginning.[45] He walks without feet, he hears without ears, and without hands,

37. *Ibid.*, (1-76-4).
38. *Ibid.*, (1-89-3).
39. *Ibid.*, (1-125-1).
40. *Ibid.*, (1-132-1).
41. *Ibid.*, (1-132-4).
42. *Ibid.*, (1-134-2).
43. *Ibid.*, (1-137-1). See also Chilappadiharam—Maduraik Kandam—Aiychiyar Kuravai 35 to 37.
44. *Ibid.*, (1-140-1).
45. *Ibid.*, (1-141-3).

> he performs his many deeds; without a tongue he enjoys all the tastes and without a voice he speaks most eloquently; without a body he touches, without eyes he sees and without a nose he smells every odour. So marvellous in all ways are his acts that none can speak of his greatness."[46]

Shiva finally states:

> "He whom the Vedas and the wise thus hymn and whom the sages contemplate is that son of Dasharatha who loves his votaries, the king of Koshala, the Blessed Lord".[47]

After this prelude Shiva tells Parvati to listen carefully to that Ram-Charit-Manas which was once related by Kakbhushundi to Garuda.[48] He states:

> "Whenever righteousness decays and demons, vile and arrogant wax strong and work lawless deeds beyond the telling, and Brahmans and cows and gods and earth suffer hurt, the gracious Lord puts on various bodily forms and relieves the distress of his faithful servants."[49]

Then he gives the causes for the birth of Rama, each marvellous in its own way[50] and relates five causes. They are—

1. Story of Jaya—Vijaya, the two gate keepers of Vishnu.
2. Story of Jalandhar.
3. Story of the curse of Narada.
4. Story of Manu and Satroopa.
5. Story of Pratapabhanu.

Summaries of the above stories are as follows:—

1. *Story of Jaya-Vijaya*: Jaya and Vijaya, the two brothers, were the gatekeepers of Vishnu. They were cursed by Sanakadi Muni as they did not allow them to meet Vishnu. The two at first were born as Hiranyakashipu and Hrinyaksha. One was killed by the incarnation of Vishnu as Narasimha and the other by his incarnation as Varaha. They were later born as Ravana and Kumbhakarna, as they had to be born and be killed by Vishnu thrice according to the curse of the Muni. Here, Kashyap and Aditi were born as Dasharatha and Kaushalya and the Lord was

46. *Ibid.*, (1-142-3, 4).
47. *Ibid.*, (1-142).
48. *Ibid.*, (1-145).
49. *Ibid.*, (1-148-3, 4).
50. *Ibid.*, (1-149-1).

born as Rama.[51] The original sources for this story are Bhagawat Purana and Padma Purana.[52]

2. *Story of Jalandhar*: There was a demon by name Jalandhar. In one aeon Shiva seeing the gods in distress, on account of the demon, fought with him but in vain due to the power of chastity of his wife Vrinda. "So the Lord Rama by a trick caused her to break her vow and thus accomplished the purpose of the gods. When she discovered the secret stratagem, she was furious and cursed him. Hari, the Blessed Lord, gracious and full of sportive wiles, accepted the curse. In that aeon Jalandhar was born again as Ravana, and Rama slew him and granted him final release".[53] The original sources for this story are Skandha Purana, Shiva Mahapurana and Ananda Ramayana.[54]

3. *Story of the Curse of Narada*: Once Narada was attracted by the natural beauty of a place on the banks of the Ganges where there was a solitary cave. He took to intense meditation. This frightened Indra, the King of gods and he sent his Cupid 'Kamadeva' with the damsels like Rambha and others to disturb him from his deep meditation. This was in vain. Kamadeva himself was terrified and requested Narada to excuse him. Narada excused him but prided himself that he had conquered Kamadeva. He went to Shiva and related the incident and Shiva warned him not to repeat that tale to Vishnu even if the subject arises.[55] But Narada did not pay heed to this advice, went to Vishnu and related the incident to him with pride. Vishnu created an extremely beautiful city on Narada's way. In that city lived King Sheelanidhi who had a daughter Vishwamohini of extraordinary charm. Narada was received by the king. He saw the girl who was to be married at a swayamvara. Narada slipped down from his state of brahmacharya and thought of a scheme to marry her. He went straight to Vishnu and prayed to him, "Grant me, Lord, such beauty as is thine (Hari); for in no other way may I win her".[56] Vishnu said, "My help is always there for your good". Narada got the form of a monkey ('Hari', also means monkey). At the

51. *Ibid.*, (1-149-2 to 150-2).
52. 'Manas-Balkand Ke Sroth'—Shreesh Kumar, p. 41.
53. Ram Charit Manas'—(1-150-3 to 1-151-1).
54. 'Manas Balkand Ke Sroth'—Shreesh Kumar, p. 41.
55. Ram Charit Manas'—(1-155-4).
56. *Ibid.*, (1-160-3).

time of the swayamvara, Narada raised his head again and again,[57] but this was only repulsive. Meanwhile Vishnu himself had come to the swayamvara in the form of a king and the girl garlanded him. Vishnu carried away the bride. Narada was utterly bewildered. Two of the Shiva's henchmen who were there, asked him to go and see his face in a mirror and ran away. Narada cursed those two to become demons.[58] He looked at his image in the water and found the form given to him by Vishnu to be that of a monkey (Hari). On the way, Vishnu with Lakshmi and the new bride met him and enquired of his distress. Under the grip of illusion, Narada got infuriated and cursed:

> "You are a mass of jealousy and guile! You are utterly self-centred and deceitful, continually practising guile! * * * * Assume the same form as that in which you cheated me! That is my curse! You made me look like a monkey, so monkeys will be your helpers; you caused me dire disgrace so you will sorrow for the loss of your wife! "[59]

Vishnu received it gladly on himself and begged Narada's forgiveness whereafter he withdrew the power of his illusion and there were neither Lakshmi nor the Princess. Narada was terrified and requested him to nullify the curse,[60] but the Lord expressed that the result of the curse was what he desired. He however asked Narada to wander over the earth repeating the hundred names of Shiva for—

> "No one is as dear to him as Shiva, and he whom Purari bestows not his favour, wins not to faith in him".[61]

Narada departed singing the glory of Rama. The two henchmen of Shiva met Narada on the way and requested him to cancel the curse. Narada with compassion replied:

> "Go you both and be born as demons; great be your power and splendour and might. When you shall have conquered the Universe by the strength of your arm, Vishnu shall take the form of man and you shall die in battle at Hari's hand, and so be released nor born again in the world."[62]

They were born as Ravana and Kumbhakarna, and Vishnu as Rama.

57. *Ibid.*, (1-163-1).
58. *Ibid.*, (1-163).
59. *Ibid.* (1-164-4 and 1-165-3, 4).
60. *Ibid.*, (1-166-2).
61. *Ibid.*, (1-166-4).
62. *Ibid.*, (1-167-3, 4).

Now Shiva tells Uma:

"Thus Hari's lives and acts are many—charming, beneficient and marvellous. Whenever aeon after aeon the Lord descends to earth and performs all kinds of glorious exploits, the high sages have sung his story * * * * * * * Hari is infinite, and infinite Hari's stories; and all the saints recite them and listen to them in various ways. The glorious acts of Ramachandra, cannot be sung in ten thousand aeons".[63]

The original source for this story is Shiva Purana.[64]

4. *Story of Manu and Satroopa*: Manu Swayambhuva and Satroopa from whom sprang the incomparable race of men, left for penance in old age, and took to very serious meditation with a "yearning to see with their own eyes the Supreme Lord, Impersonal, Indivisible and from a part of whom are born many a Shiva, Brahma and Vishnu, the Blessed Lord".[65] Their prayer was granted and there came a voice from the heaven 'full of ambrosial grace', saying:

"Ask for a boon".

When the sound entered their ears, they regained their original strength and beauty. The Lord manifested himself before them with the 'Primal Energy' (Adi Shakti) "from a part of whom are born those mines of virtue, innumerable Lakshmis, Umas and Saraswatis".[66] The Lord told him to ask for any boon he desired. Manu with folded hands said, "O greatest of givers and most gracious Lord! I tell thee truly. I wish to have a son like thyself".[67] Satroopa also desired the same. "May it be so", said the Lord, and added, "Where can I go to seek another like myself? I myself will come and be your son, O King.[68] * * * * * * * You will be born as king of Avadh and then I shall be your son.[69] * * * * * * * And this my Maya, the Primal Energy, who has brought the world into being, will also become incarnate."[70] With these words the Lord disappeared.

63. *Ibid.*, (1-168-1, 2, 3).
64. 'Manas—Balkand Ke Sroh—Shreesh Kumar, p. 43.
65. 'Ram Charit Manas'—(1-172-2, 3).
66. *Ibid.*, (1-176-2).
67. *Ibid.*, (1-77).
68. *Ibid.*, (1-178-1).
69. *Ibid.*, (1-179).
70. *Ibid.*, (1-180-2).

When time came, the Lord incarnated as Rama, the Maya, the Primal Energy as Sita, Manu and Satroopa as Dasharatha and Kaushalya. The original sources of this story are Bhagwat Purana and Vishnu Purana.[71]

5. *Story of Pratapabhanu:* King Satyaketu had two sons, Pratapabhanu and Arimardana, both attached to each other with mutual love, perfect and sincere. Satyaketu delivered the kingdom to Pratapabhanu and retired to forest for worship of Hari. The Minister was Dharmaruchi. Once Pratapabhanu went out into the deep forest hunting far away, and entered an ashrama of a wicked sage who was originally a king defeated by Pratapabhanu himself. By foul play and false advice, he made him feed brahmins with what he himself prepared as a disguised cook at his very capital. The simple king believed in what he said. The wicked sage once cooked the flesh of brahmins also and made him serve to brahmins. But just at the moment there was a voice from the heaven asking the brahmins not to eat it, and that the meal served contained the cooked flesh of brahmins. The brahmins instentaneously lost their temper and jointly cursed him and his people to become rakshasas[72] and left the place. Then there was a war between himself and the kings dependent on him. In the war Pratapabhanu was defeated and he with his people was killed.[73] In course of time Pratapabhanu was born as Ravana, Arimardana as Kumbhakarna and their minister Dharmaruchi as Vibhishana.[74]

The original sources for this story are Manjula Ramayana[75] of Suteekshna and Agastya Ramayana.[76]

Accordingly, Ravana, Kumbhakarna and Vibhishana were born in the pure and stainless house of Pulastya but due to the curse of the brahmins, they all became of evil form.[77] The three performed severe penance, and Brahma was pleased. Ravana ask-

71. 'Manas—Balkand Ke Sroth—Shreesh Kumar, p. 46.
72. 'Ram Charit Manas'—(1-203).
73. *Ibid.*, (1-205-3).
74. *Ibid.*, (1-206-1, 2, 3).
75. (a) 'Manas Darshan'—Dr. Krishna Lal, p. 9.
(b) 'Ram Katha'—Dr. Kamil Bulkey, p. 176.
(c) 'Hindutva'—Ram Das Gaud, p. 139.
76. 'Ram Katha'—Dr. Kamil Bulkey, p. 175.
77. 'Ram Charit Manas'—(1-206).

ed that 'he should die only at the hand of man or monkey."[78] Kumbhakarna was influenced by Saraswati and therefore the boon asked for by him was a continuous sleep for six months in a year.[79] The devoted and pious Vibhishana asked for pure devotion at the lotus feet of the Lord.[80] Ravana thereafter married Mandodari, the daughter of the Demon Mai, who was exceedingly beautiful and an ornament among womankind. The other two brothers also got married. Ravana made Lanka his capital. He once attacked Kubera and carried away his Pushpaka Vimana for his own use to fly in the air. At another time he lifted Kailasa itself. Ravana had one son Meghanada (Indrajit) who was a terror to the land of gods. There were Kumukha, Akampana, Kulisarada, Dhoomaketu, Atikaya and others, every one of them capable of conquering the world. All had magical powers to assume any form they liked, but dreamed never of any righteousness or pity.[81] Ravana was proud of all these people and their powers. He began troubling the Sun and Moon and Wind, Varuna and Kubera, Fire and Time and Yama, and all that bear rule, Kinnaras, saints, men, gods and serpents and captured every living creature, male or female, in God's creation. He ordered all his rakshasas 'to go and obstruct the Brahmans' feasts—their sacrifice; burn offerings and funeral obsequies'.[82] He ruled over all as an unscrupulous emperor. "He reigned supreme and none could say him nay. Many were the fair and noble women he wedded, daughters of gods and Yakshas, Gandharvas and men, Kinnaras and serpents winning them by the might of his arm. * * * * * * * In what-so-ever land they found cows and brahmans, there they set fire to the city and village and town. Morality was nowhere practised. Veda and Purana were never heard".[83]

Earth was panic-stricken and sore distressed, and she took the form of a cow to represent her lot to gods and sages. She went accordingly and lamented out her pitiable state. Now all the gods, sages and Gandharvas went to Brahma who instructed them to go to Vishnu. Shiva was also there at that time and he advis-

78. *Ibid.*, (1-207-2).
79. *Ibid.*, (1-207-4).
80. *Ibid.*, (1-207).
81. *Ibid.*, (1-212-1).
82. *Ibid.*, (1-212-4).
83. *Ibid.*, (1-215-3, 4).

ed them that the Lord is every where and asked them to pray to him. Brahma followed the advice and prayed to Lord to relieve them of all their sufferings from Ravana and the rakshasas. Immediately, there was a voice of the Lord from the heaven:

> "Fear not, Ye sages, adepts and high gods! For your sakes I will assume the form of man and with all my parts take human form in the noble solar race. Kashyapa and Aditi performed severe penance, and I promised them a boon long since. They have become manifest as Dasharatha and Kaushalya, a royal pair in the city of Koshala. In their house I shall become incarnate as four brothers, princes of the line of Raghu. I shall bring to fulfilment the word of Narada, and descend to earth with my high consort. I shall relieve the whole earth of its burden; be not afraid, O Company of gods! "[84]

This gave them all consolation and all were confident. Now, 'Brahma instructed the gods each to take on earth the form of a monkey and wait on the feet of Hari and returned to his own sphere'.[85] Consequently, the gods were all born as monkeys and waited for the Lord.

Tulasidas now comes to the main story of Ramayana, and states that there lived in Ayodhya a righteous and wise king of the house of Raghu by name Dasharatha. His wives Kaushalya and others[86] were very devoted to him and to Vishnu. The king and the queens were perfectly happy but had no son. He expressed his disconsolate feeling to his guru Vasishtha who consoled him saying that he would beget four sons. 'The guru summoned Sringi the seer (Rishya Shringa) and caused an auspicious sacrifice to be performed for the birth of a son. When the sage devoutly offered the burnt offering, Agni was made manifest, bearing in his hand the oblation'. He said, "All that Vasishtha has purported in his heart is accomplished according to your desire. Go King, divide this offering and distribute the parts in due proportion".[87] The fire-god disappeared, and the king did as advised. He distributed the offering to his queens, the details of which will be given later. Rama was born to Kaushalya, Bharata to Kaikeyi and Lakshmana and Shatrughna to Sumitra.

84. *Ibid.*, (1-219-1, 2, 3, 4).
85. *Ibid.*, (1-219).
86. *Ibid.*, (1-220).
87. *Ibid.*, (1-221-4).

Thus we see that Kambar straight away relates the story and Tulasidas explains in detail the causes for the incarnation. Now we shall analyse the portion dealt with by Kambar and Tulasidas before the actual birth of Rama.

(a) *The four brothers*:

Kambar: Vishnu is born as Rama, Chakra of Vishnu as Bharata, Adisesha as Lakshmana and Shankha or shell as Shatrughna.[88]

Tulasi: Vishnu himself is born as four Part-incarnations.[89]

Here it may be stated that in all prior works including Hari Vamsha Purana, Vishnu Purana, Vayu Purana and even the Mahabharata, the Part-incarnations of Lord Vishnu are described. It is only in Udara Raghava which is supposed to be a work of the fourteenth century A.D. that we find for the first time in the Sanskrit literature Rama, Bharata, Lakshmana and Shatrughna described as incarnations of Vishnu, Shankha, Seshnag, and Chakra respectively, which is later on followed in Adhyatma Ramayana, Padma Purana, Ananda Ramayana, Satyopakhyana, Kashmiri Ramayana and other works.[90]

(b) *Distribution of the ambrosial drink*:

Kambar: Dasharatha at first gives half of the drink to Kaushalya and then half of the remaining to Kaikeyi, whereafter he gives half of the still remaining to Sumitra, and the rest again to Sumitra.[91]

Tulasidas: The king gives half of the offering to Kaushalya. He divides the remaining half into two parts. To Kaikeyi he gives one; the other he halves again. He places these two halves in the hands of Kaushalya and Kaikeyi who give them to Sumitra.[92]

Thus the three queens according to Kambar got as much as those in Tulasidas, that is Kaushalya half, Kaikeyi a quarter and Sumitra twice one-eighth which is in proportion to the greatness of the personalities born to them. Here it may be stated that in Valmiki and Adhyatma Ramayanas, the proportions are not

88. 'Kamba Ramayanam'—Gopalakrishnamachariyar Edn. (1-5-22).
89. 'Ram Charit Manas'—(1-219-1).
90. 'Ram Katha'—Dr. Kamil Bulkey, p. 271.
91. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (1-5-88, 89, 90. 91).
92. 'Ram Charit Manas' (1-222-1, 2).

logical. In Valmiki, Kaushalya gets half, Sumitra one fourth and one eighth, and Kaikeyi only one-eighth,[93] whereas in Adhyatma Ramayana one fourth is given to Kaushalya, the same quantity to Kaikeyi and twice that to Sumitra.[94]

(e) *Slander against Sita:*

While Valmiki has referred to Sita's exile after return from Lanka to Ayodhya, Tulasidas has referred to it indirectly while paying homage to the Lord saying, "He counted as nought all the sins of those who slandered Sita, nay, he reassured them and gave them a place in his own realm".[95] Kambar seems to have avoided this incident completely as inadequate.

(d) *Sugriva and Vibhishana:*

In the body of the story of Kambar and Tulasidas, Sugriva is not described to have taken the wife of the dead Vali as his concubine as in Valmiki. But Tulasidas in the beginning itself attacks the character of Sugriva indirectly while singing the greatness of Rama by saying, "The very sin for which he slew Vali like a hunter, Sugriva afterwards committed."[96]

The same is said of Vibhishana also by Tulasidas as "Vibhishana too was guilty of the same crime, but Rama regarded it not at all; rather Raghuvir honoured him when he met Bharata and sang his praises in the royal court."[97]

Kambar has not made any such statement and has been consistent in depicting the high morale of Sugriva, Vibhishana, Tara and Mandodari.

(e) *Birth of Rama in the Original Form of Vishnu:*

The birth of Rama is depicted differently in the two works. In Kambar, Lord Vishnu is born to Kaushalya in the normal way,[98] and the maid-servants inform Dasharatha about the birth of the son. But Tulasidas gives a supernatural colour to this incident. Rama manifests himself before Kaushalya in the orgi-

93. 'Valmiki Ramayana' (1-16-26 to 29).
94. 'Adhyatma Ramayana' (1-3-10 to 12).
95. 'Ram Charit Manas' (1-32-2)—See commentary and foot note on p. 24. Shyam Sundar Das Edn.
96. 'Ram Charit Manas' (1-46-3).
97. *Ibid.*, (1-46-4).
98. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (1-5-103).

nal form of Vishnu with four hands carrying Shankha, Chakra and Gada and wearing a garland of forest flowers.[99] Kaushalya says with folded hands:

"Oh Lord of Lakshmi! Full many a Universe, created by illusion, dwells *in thy every hair—so say the Vedas—yet* didst thou rest in my womb—a jest to disturb the minds of the most sober when they hear it!"[100]

"The Lord smiled when such knowledge dawned on his mother's mind; he would perform all kinds of marvellous acts; he declared and related to his mother the beautiful stories of his earlier lives that she might love him as her son.[101] Again his mother cried—for her brain was reeling, 'Abandon this form, dear boy! Play thy childish games, most lovable! No joy can equal this'. Thereupon the wise Lord of lords became a child and began to cry."[102]

Such a description is found in Adhyatma Ramayana[103] following the supernatural birth of Krishna in Bhagawat. It is also found in Padmapurana, Ananda Ramayana and Rama Rahasya.[104]

Hereafter we shall proceed with the comparative study of the main story as depicted by both the poets.

1. *Childhood of the Princes*:

Kambar: King Dasharatha is specially attached to Rama. The four princes grow studying the necessary arts. Lakshmana is specially attached to Rama as is Shatrughna to Bharata.[105] The people and the king are very happy.

The poet does not speak about Rama's childhood or about the playful actions of the children and the pleasure derived by their parents.

Tulasidas: Following Adhyatma Ramayana, Ananda Ramayana and Satyopakhyana, the poet elaborately describes the childhood of the four princes, especially of Rama with a touch of

99. 'Ram Charit Manas' (1-224-Chand 1).
100. *Ibid.*, (1-224-Chand 2).
101. *Ibid.*, (1-224-Chand 3).
102. *Ibid.*, (1-224-Chand 4).
103. 'Adhyatma Ramayana' (1-3-16, 17).
104. 'Manas—Balkand Ke Srot'—Shreesh Kumar, p. 7.
105. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (1-5-129, 130). See article on "Unique contribution of Kambar and Tulasidas"—Dr. S. Shankar Raju Naidu, in 'Dr. R. P. Sethu Pillai Silver Jubilee Commemoration Volume—1961', p. 85.

the supernatural. At the very birth of Rama, the Sun stays at its place without moving towards west for a month which nobody notices.[106]

The four princes delight in boyish games. Rama and Lakshmana go together as are Bharata and Shatrughna from their very childhood.[107] Rama is the centre of joy. His mother cradles him fondling and calling him 'little darling'. She dresses him in rich garments with beautiful ornaments and with precious stones. The Lord plays his childish tricks and delights all the dwellers in the city.[108] Here the poet says:

"One day Kaushalya leaves Rama sleeping, and goes to prayer. To her surprise she sees him eating the offerings. She runs back alarmed to the cradle and sees him sleeping there as before. She comes back and sees her son again. When Rama sees his mother perplexed, the Lord smiles sweetly and displays to his mother his own wonderous form. A myriad universes she beholds set on every hair; numberless suns and moons, Shivas and Brahmas,[109] many a mountain and river, sea, land and wood; time, destiny, the three constituents, knowledge and nature—all that she had ever heard of! When she beholds the mystic vision, she stands in dire alarm with folded hands. She sees the soul that illusion makes to dance; she sees the faith that sets it free. She feels a thrill of awe; no words come from her lips. She closes her eyes and bows her head before his feet. Seeing his mother lost in amazement, Kharari once again becomes a child; but she cannot sing his praises for very fear. She thinks that she holds the Father of the world to be her son. Earnestly Hari warns her nowhere to repeat what she had seen. Again and again Kaushalya humbly requests him with folded hands never again to affect her with the influence of his magic power."[110] Thus Rama and all the other princes play all kinds of childish tricks. They play about in Dasharatha's courtyard. Of Rama, it is said:

"When the king summons him for meals, he would not leave his boy-companions and come. When Kaushalya goes to call him, the Lord toddles off and runs away; He comes

106. 'Ram Charit Manas' (1-227).
107. *Ibid.*, (1-230-2).
108. *Ibid.*, (1-232-4).
109. *Ibid.*, (1-233 and 234-1).
110. *Ibid.*, (1-234).

with his body covered with grime and dust, and the king with a smile takes him on his lap. At his meals he finds a chance to run off mischievously this way or that with a scream of joy, his face besmeared with curds and rice."[111]

Then Rama goes to their guru's house to study and 'in a short time mastered all the arts'.[112] Other princes also learn all the necessary lessons. The princes learn archery also, and 'those animals which are slain by Rama's arrows quit their bodies and go straight to heaven.'[113]

Thus the description of the childhood of Rama and the other princes is given in detail by Tulasidas, whereas Kambar has kept practically silent over this aspect of the story. Some scholars say that Kambar had a son by name Ambikapati who died at a very early age. This made the imaginative mind of Kambar keep away from the description of the childhood days of Rama and the other characters throughout the epic.

2. *Vishwamitra's Request to Dasharatha:*

Kambar: The fame of Rama attracts Vishwamitra to Dasharatha. He requests him to send Rama with him to overcome the rakshasas who were obstructing him from performing the penance and the religious ceremonies he had undertaken. Dasharatha does not want to part with Rama. So he explains about the lack of experience in warfare of young Rama and offers himself for the work.[114] Vishwamitra resents the denial of his request and gets terribly excited. Vasishtha advises Dasharatha suitably and the king allows Rama and also Lakshmana to accompany Vishwamitra.[115]

Tulasidas: The great sage Vishwamitra knowing of the incarnation of Rama, approaches Dasharatha and tells him of the harassings of the rakshasas and requests him to send Rama and Lakshmana[116] with him to kill the demons and complete his sacrifice. The king's heart beats fast and his face turns pale, and he says:

111. *Ibid.,* (1-235).
112. *Ibid.,* (1-236-2).
113. *Ibid.,* (1-237-2).
114. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (1-6-12).
115. *Ibid.,* (1-6-17).
116. 'Ram Charit Manas' (1-239-5).

"O sage, ask of me land or cows or wealth or treasure. But all my sons are dear to me as life; I cannot give you Rama. He is too young."[117]

Then Vasishtha advises the king so as to resolve his doubts and the two sons are sent with the sage.

Here it may be noted that in the Valmiki Ramayana, the sage approaches when Dasharatha was talking about the matrimony of his sons, but in Kambar and Tulasidas no matrimonial talks are brought in. In Kambar, the sage asks for only Rama whereas in Tulasidas the two sons are asked for. Kambar makes Lakshmana accompany Rama though not requested, but Tulasi makes the sage himself ask for the younger brother also.

3. *Death of Tataka:*

Kambar: Vishwamitra goes to the forest followed by Rama and Lakshmana. They pass the place where Shiva burnt Kamadeva with his third eye.[118] Then comes an extremely hot desert. Rama asks for the cause of the terrible heat and the sage replies that it is the abode of demoness Tataka. He relates her history and the incidents of her harassing. Tataka herself appears at the time like a burning mountain of soot,[119] and laughs at them in a thundering voice. The poet says:

"She trod the forest with the velocity of a whirlwind uprooting hills and big trees by the current of air disturbed by her swift march, and wherever planted her feet, adorned with anklets containing mountains in place of pearls and stones, the earth became depressed admitting waters of the oceans to run into the depressed valleys. Even the cruel deities of the forest quaked with fear and hid themselves into the bowels of earth."[120]

The sage asks Rama to kill her but Rama does not do so, as she is a woman.[121] But the sage explains that she is not really a woman but a dangerous demoness, worse than death and that if she has left out the sages from swallowing, it is because they are only bones.[122] In view of her atrocities Rama shoots her

117. 'Ram Charit Manas' (1-240-2, 3).
118. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (1-7-2).
119. *Ibid.*, (1-7-46).
120. *Ibid*, (1-7-47)—Trn. by C. P. Venkatarama Iyer, 'Kamban and His Art'—p. 73.
121. *Ibid.*, (1-7-53).
122. *Ibid.*, (1-7-55).

down dead though she at first threw her lances at Rama and rained stones on him. The arrow of Rama enters her chest and comes out of it as the words of the wise enter the ears of the unwise and come out without staying in.[123]

The poet says that this was Rama's 'maiden fight' and his arrows enjoyed the first taste of the blood of the rakshasas.[124] This picture is in a big chapter of seventy four stanzas each of four lines.

Tulasidas:

The incident has been treated in brief in a single chaupayi of four lines. As the sage was going with the princes:

> "The sage pointed out Tataka and when she heard him, she rushed up in rage. With a single arrow the Lord took off her life and granted her in pity a place in his own realm."[125]

4. *Vishwamitra's Penance and His Sacrificial Performances:*

Kambar: On the way, the sage relates the story of his own genealogy to the two princes and then they approach the place where Vishnu took Vamanavatara. The sage relates this story in full. Then they reach the place of the sacrifice. The sage performs his sacrifice, while Rama and Lakshmana guard the scene from the evil rakshasas 'as the eyelids guard the pupil of the eye'. Rama covers the whole place with arrows lest the blood of the flying rakshasas should fall there[126] and pollute the sacrifice. Now comes Mareecha who is driven far away across the sea, and then Subahu who is slain downright by Rama.[127] Others run away terrified or are killed by the princes. The sage thus completes the penance.

Then they three start for Mithila.

Tulasidas: The scene is given in a very few lines. They reach the place of penance. The princes guard the sacrifice by driving away Mareecha to a thousand miles beyond the sea with a headless arrow and killing Subahu on the spot with an arrow of fire.

123. *Ibid.*, (1-7-71).
124. *Ibid.*, (1-7-75).
125. 'Ram Charit Manas' (1-242-3).
126. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (1-8-49).
127. *Ibid.*, (1-8-52).

After a few days, the three start to witness a ceremony at Mithila.

5. *On the way to Gautama Ashrama*:

Kambar: As a prelude to the forthcoming incident of salvation to Ahalya, the poet states that the three arrive at a cool grove of trees and stay there for a night when the sage relates the story of the curse of Indra by Durvasa.[128]

Then they reach the banks of the Ganges and the sage relates the story of the birth of the Ganges with details of Bhageeratha's penance.[129]

Tulasidas: The poet does not relate these stories. They straightaway reach Gautama Ashrama where Ahalya lay transformed into a stone, en route to Mithila.

6. *Salvation to Ahalya*:

Kambar: The poet first speaks of the salvation of Ahalya followed by the story of her transformation into a stone. The three approach the place where Ahalya was lying in the stone form. As soon as the sacred dust particles of the feet of Rama touch the stone, she rises in her original form getting rid of the curse of Gautama, her husband. Then the sage relates the incident of Gautama's curse to Indra[130] and Ahalya.[131] Then they go to Gautama Ashrama and Vishwamitra requests him to take his wife back[132] and he does so accordingly. Then the three go ahead towards Mithila.

Tulasidas: Here again the poet has been very short. The curse and the consequences thereof have not at all been related, as the poet believes that the story is known to his readers, and secondly he wants to avoid the narration of the immoral deed of Indra, the king of gods, and its results. The poet straightaway says that the three see a stone near an ashrama on their way. When asked by Rama, the sage states that the stone is Ahalya who is so due to a curse and is awaiting the dust of his lotus feet. As soon as she gets the touch of Rama's foot, she gets up, and sings the

128. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (1-9-17).
129. *Ibid.*, (1-7-54).
130. *Ibid.*, (1-9-78).
131. *Ibid.*, (1-9-79).
132. *Ibid.*, (1-9-85).

praise of Rama stating that it was really good that she got the curse.[133] Then she goes to the abode of her husband.

Here it may be mentioned that the turning of Ahalya into a stone is found neither in Valmiki Ramayana nor in Adhyatma Ramayana. It is found in Raghuvamsha and Padma Purana, Ananda Ramayana, Satyopakhyana, Nrisimha Purana, Skanda Purana, Kathasaritsagar, Vahni Purana etc.

Another important aspect that is to be noted is the behaviour of Indra and Ahalya. In Valmiki Ramayana, Ahalya is approached by God Indra in the form of a sage direct with the base desire and she agrees to him. Gautama returns from his bath and ablutions when Indra was taking leave expressing his gratitude.[134]

In Kambar, Ahalya is totally ignorant of the fact that it was Indra and takes him to be her husband himself as he was so disguised.[135] Indra leaves the place in the form of a cat, when Gautama comes and curses them both.[136]

7. *Pre-Matrimonial Love of Rama and Sita:*

Kambar: The three enter the city of Mithila. The top flags of the city wave swiftly and the poet says:

"The spirit of Mithila seemed to say, 'I prayed both day and night,
And sweetest Lakshmi, lotus born, of fairest form and bright,
In answer to my prayers left her thousand petalled flower,
She left her home and sought to dwell in my own greenest bower.

Come thou, my gracious lord, to see and wed that purest one,
The pennants seemed her outstretched arms welcoming Dasharath's son."[137]

They go through the City seeing such bright flags, the high buildings, the dancing houses, women folk singing and swinging, decorated and rich bazars, elephants fighting, horses marching, women playing with balls and swimming in tanks, youths roaming about and various other sights. They go near the king's palace and

133. 'Ram Charit Manas' (1-244-Chand 3).
134. 'Valmiki Ramayana' (1-38 Sarga).
135. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (1-9-76).
136. *Ibid.*, (1-9-82).
137. *Ibid.*, (1-10-1)—Trn. as in 'Kamba Ramayanam—A study' by V. V. S. Aiyar.

happen to pass below the very residence of Sita. Now, the poet says:

"Atop the terrace of the Virgin Bower,
Upon the balcony o'erlooking swans
At play with mates (in lotus-teeming pool),
They saw a dazzling form—and stood entranced—
Effulgence sheer of gold, the fragrance sweet
Of blossoms, taste delicious nector gives,
The pleasure perfect poesy yields."[138]

The sage while telling the young princes the true cause of his going to Mithila, takes them through the very bower where Sita was standing. The poet says: -

"The killing lance and Death itself, all these,
We would surpass, surpass, they seemed to say:
The quality of her of dancing eye
Who can e'er tell, if hill and rampart strong,
Hard stone, and grass saw her and melted sheer?
E'en so stood she, the Fruit of Womanhood!"[139]

Now, Rama and Sita happen to look at each other. The Poet describes this incident thus:

"So stood that maiden of rare loveliness
And eye caught eye and each the other ate;
As quite they stood, minds into one were fused;
The hero looked at her and Sita looked at him."[140]

Explaining the process, the poet continues:

"The pair of pointed lances called her glance
Sank deep in shoulders broad of handsome Ram:
The lotus eyes of him with sounding anklets
In turn empierced the bosom of the maid—
Bewitching like enchantress fair of yore."[141]

The poet further continues with sublime imagination and says:

"Enchained by lassos called her drinking looks,
And heart to heart each one adducing 'main,
He of the handed bow and she with sword-like eyes,
In turn entered each other's heart."[142]

Then comes the separation: -

"That she could not the handsome one embrace,
The bangled maiden like a statue stood:

138. *Ibid.*, (1-10-23).
139. *Ibid.*, (1-10-32)
140. *Ibid.*, (1-10-35)
141. *Ibid.*, (1-10-36).
142. *Ibid.*, (1-10-37)

Her heart and will and beauty trailing him,
The youth with sage dissolved from sight."[143]

The Pre-matrimonial meeting of Rama and Sita is over. They speak not a word because:

"What need for any words from us when they
Who parted from their bed on ocean dark
Unite again?"[143a]

Only one vision in a moment and that is all they have.

The three go ahead and are received by King Janaka.

Tulasidas: The three reach Mithila and are pleased to see each and every part of the city which is beyond words.[144] "The beauty of the splendid house where Sita dwelt defies description."[145] Many a prince had pitched his tent. The sage selects a pleasant mango grove and the three stay there. Janaka, the king of Mithila, hears of this and comes with his ministers. Janaka gets a pleasant surprise to see the two princes like Rama and Lakshmana with the sage and enquires of Vishwamitra about them. On hearing the reply, Janaka takes them to be nothing less than the Absolute and the individual soul. The three thereafter move to a special apartment. The two brothers go out to see the city and all those who see them are over joyed. Early next morning Rama and Lakshmana go to the garden of the king to bring flowers for pooja.[146] At that opportune moment, Sita also comes with her girl friends to the same garden to offer her prayer to Parvati at the temple there on the advice of her mother.[147] One of the girls leaves the company and goes to see the garden alone, and by chance sees the two princes, which makes her run back to Sita and inform her about them. Her words are immensely pleasing to Sita and she gets anxious to see them.[148] Sita goes behind that girl. Now the poet says:

"None knew that the love (of Rama and Sita) had been theirs of old."[149]

143. *Ibid.*, (1-10-39).
143a. *Ibid.*, (1-10-38).
144. 'Ram Charit Manas' (1-246-1).
145. *Ibid.*, (1-246).
146. *Ibid.*, (1-260-1).
147. *Ibid.*, (1-261-1).
148. *Ibid.*, (1-262-4).
149. *Ibid.*, (1-262-4).

Sita begins to 'look this way and that like a frightened fawn.' While Sita is so coming, Rama hears:

> "The tinkle of her bracelets and anklets and the bells on her girdle, ponders in his heart and says to Lakshmana that it sounds as though Kamadeva were beating his drum, ambitious to vanquish the world. So saying he turns and looks in that direction, and his eyes are fixed on Sita's face as the partridge gazes on the moon. Motionless stays his beauteous eyes, as though king Nimi (a great grandfather of Solar Race who looked at his people as his own eyes and got the boon of ever remaining in the eye-lids of all human beings) has deserted his eye-lids in modest confusion."[150]

The seed of love is thus sown in the heart of Rama without a word passing between them. Sita feels the same. She sees the graceful faces of the handsome princes. Now the poet says:

> "Her eyes were filled with longing, as glad as though they looked upon their treasure. Her eyes grew tired with gazing on Raghupati's beauty; even her eyelids ceased to move; she was faint with excess of love, like the partridge when she looks on the autumn moon. She drew Rama into her heart by the pathway of her eyes and carefully closed on him the door of her eyelids."[151]

Then both feel keenly the pangs of separation. Rama and Lakshmana go to their teacher and Sita goes to the temple, prays for her desired object, gets a signal of approval of the goddess and returns back to the palace.

Here it is worth mentioning that the pre-matrimonial love affair is neither found in Valmiki Ramayana nor Adhyatma Ramayana. As a matter of fact no other work has this pre-matrimonial love of Rama and Sita, in the true sense of the term, save the Ramayanas of Kambar and Tulasidas. It is clear that Kambar brought in this incident in line with the Tamil tradition of marriage as found in Tirukkural and other classical works representing the culture of Tamil. For Tulasidas, though the two dramas viz., Prasanna Raghava of Jaideva and Mahaveera Charita of Bhavabhooti are ascribed to be the sources of this picture and correctly too, his life and long travels up to Rameswaram in the south and Badrikashram in the north are also responsible for his bringing in this

150. *Ibid.*, (1-263-1, 2).
151. *Ibid.*, (1-265-4).

picture of pre-matrimonial love. The identical deviation of Kambar and Tulasidas from other similar epics, makes us believe that Kamba Ramayanam also is one of the sources for Tulasi Ramayan.[152] The comparative study of this picture has been very elaborately brought out in 'Kambar and Tulasi'.[153]

Certain salient points of similarity may be mentioned here:

(a) Kambar states that the pre-matrimonial love is based on the fact that Rama and Sita are incarnations of Vishnu and Lakshmi respectively, and they had only 'parted from their bed on ocean-dark' to unite again.[154]

Tulasidas also stresses the same point. He says that they were the incarnations of Vishnu and Lakshmi and that 'the love had been theirs of old.'[155]

(b) Kambar states that Rama was perfectly confident of his righteous conduct and felt that his mind could never tread any wrong path, and consequently he was sure of the grounds for his spontaneous love. Rama says within himself:

"My mind will follow only the path of righteousness
It can never be otherwise.
Hence she should necessarily be a virgin princess.
It is beyond doubt".[156]

Tulasidas expresses the same sense of righteous conduct on the part of Rama. Here Rama is made to tell his brother Lakshmana during the incident of pre-matrimonial love:

"When I look on her ethereal beauty, my soul that is by nature pure is disturbed—God alone knows why! Mark me, brother, the throbbing of my side betokens fortune! Men of the house of Raghu never even in thought set foot upon the road of evil; that is their nature. So I feel perfect confidence, for I have never been dreamed of looking on another's wife".[157]

152. 'Kambar and Tulasi'—S. Shankar Raju Naidu, (Madras University Hindi Publication—No. 1).

153. This offers a detailed study of the Pre-matrimonial Love of Rama and Sita.

154. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (1-10-38).

155. 'Ram Charit Manas' (1-262-4).

156. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (1-10-147).

157. 'Ram Charit Manas' (1-264-2, 3).

The poet here suggests, like Kambar, that Rama was sure of his purity in his pre-matrimonial love which otherwise would be wrong as Sita was a 'Veerya Shulka'.[158]

(c) In both, no word passes between Rama and Sita. Both are based on the element of slight, which, in turn, is brought in on the principle of incarnation.

8. *Picturisation of Swayamvara:*

Kambar: The poet follows the ancient tradition of 'Erutazhuval'[159] as described in 'Mullaikkali' of Kalittohai wherein the bride is offered to that courageous youth who would bring under control a bull with sharp horns. Very many competitors had already tried the bow to get the hands of Sita but in vain. When Rama was prepared to try the bow, it was brought by sixty thousand men carrying it on their shoulders, each being like a big elephant with stoney shoulders. These sixty thousand strong had to stop at several places. Thus the bow is brought to the place of Swayamvara. Rama lifts it up 'as if it were the wedding garland brought for his beloved.'[160] The people assembled there could only see him lifting the bow and instantaneously hear the sound of its breaking.[161]

Tulasidas: The poet presents a picture of the Swayamvara as is generally understood. The bow is kept already there in the right place. Many princes and kings are assembled including Ravana and Banasura who merely look at the bow and leave the place accepting defeat.[162]

> "Then ten thousand princes all together, essayed to lift it, but still it resisted their effort."[163]

Now king Janaka becomes desperate and says with dismay:

> "My friends, none could even move it an inch from the ground! Now let no one proud of his prowess be angered if I hold that there are no heroes left on earth. Give up hope and return to your own homes. It is not the will of God that the princess of Videha should wed. I shall lose merit if

158. 'Kambar and Tulasi'—S. Shankar Raju Naidu, p. 24.
159. *Ibid.*, p. 124.
160. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (1-12-33).
161. *Ibid.*, (1-12-34).
162. 'Ram Charit Manas' (1-283-1).
163. *Ibid.*, (1-284-1).

> I break my vow; so the maiden must remain a maiden—what can I do? Had I known, my friends, that there was no man in the world, I should not have made the vow and become a laughing-stock".[164]

All these words are unbearable to Lakshmana. They prick like thorns in his heart.

> "He was furious and frowned; his lip trembled and his eyes were red with wrath".[165]

He with respects to Rama, spoke in a masterly tone:

> "In an assembly where anyone of the house of Raghu is present, no one may utter such rude words as Janak has uttered, though he knows that the jewel of the Raghu race is here. Hearken sun of the lotus solar race, * * * * * * Give me leave, and I will lift the universe like a ball and smash it like an unbaked earthen jar! I can break mount Meru like a radish! And what, Blessed Lord, is this rotten old bow to the greatness of your sovereign might? So, Lord, bid me and I'll show you some sport; just watch me and I'll lift the bow like a lotus stalk and run off with it a hundred thousand miles.[166] * * * * * * * If I don't, I swear by my Lord's feet, I'll never take bow and quiver in hand again".[167]

On a sign from Rama, Lakshmana seated himself down nearby.[168]

Thereafter finding the time to be opportune, sage Vishwamitra asks Rama to try it. Rama without any feeling of pleasure or pain in heart, gets up with all humility. Sita is already there standing with a garland in hand. She sees Rama and offers prayer to gods for his success, and also accuses her father for his severe condition.[169] Rama also, knowing all, looks at Sita and then at the bow. He bows to his teacher and lifts up the bow very lightly. The poet now says:

> "All stand watching, but none could see him grasp it, raise it and draw it tight. In that moment Rama broke the bow in half, and the dread, harsh crash resounded through the worlds".[170]

164. *Ibid.*, (1-285-4).
165. *Ibid.*, (1-285-4).
166. *Ibid.*, (1-286-1, 2, 3, 4).
167. *Ibid.*, (1-286).
168. *Ibid.*, (1-287-2).
169. *Ibid.*, (1-291-1).
170. *Ibid.*, (1-294-4).

Then Satananda Rishi gives the word and 'Sita cast the garland on Rama's breast'.[171]

In so far as the picturisation of the Swayamvara is concerned, both are unique in their own way. Kambar, while following Valmiki, has introduced an element of Tamil tradition as found in 'Erutazhuval'. In Valmiki, the bow is brought to the place of Swayamvara in a box with eight wheels and dragged by five thousand men.[172] Adhyatma Ramayana also offers only a very short account of this picture, but Kambar and Tulasidas felt that this is a very vital place in the development of the story and have given an elaborate description of the whole scene with minute details. There are certain salient points which are given below:

(a) Ravana and Banasura are present during the Swayamvara in Tulasi which is based on Prasanna Raghava of Jaideva, and Balaramayana of Raj Shekhara. In Kambar's picture, there is no place for Ravana or Banasura.

(b) Tulasidas describes how the people looked at Rama. Rama, says the poet, appeared to each individual according to his own taste.[173] Rama was so enchanting that eyes could not be shifted away from him.[174] None could understand the reality behind Rama, as every one was immersed in the beauty of Rama.[175]

Kambar dwells on Rama's beauty later when he goes for the marriage celebration after the arrival of Dasharatha. The poet says that one whose eye-sight fell on the shoulder of Rama, went on gazing the very shoulder; so also his lotus feet and long arms. None could shift the eyes from that particular part of Rama. Then, the poet asks, how it could be possible for any one to see the entire form! They could see only a part of Rama, just as a portion alone of the reality of God could be seen by a person following any particular sect.[176]

(c) Tulasidas brings in an element of disappointment and dismay in the heart of Janaka finding none able to lift or even shift the bow. This is based on the drama 'Hanumannatak'.[177] Then

171. *Ibid.*, (1-297-4).
172. 'Valmiki Ramayana' (1-67).
173. 'Ram Charit Manas' (1-274).
174. *Ibid.*, (1-277-2).
175. *Ibid.*, (1-277-4).
176. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (1-19-19).
177. 'Manas—Balkand Ke Srot'—Shreesh Kumar, p. 22.

Lakshmana's fury and his hard words are given expression to by the poet. Kambar has not at all brought Lakshmana into the picture here.

(d) In Kambar and Tulasi, '*Veni, Vidi, Vici*' is the case. Rama came, saw Sita and conquered, whereas in Valmiki and other Ramayanas it is as Rama came, conquered and then saw Sita.

(e) In Kambar, the information of Rama's breaking the bow is given to Sita by Neelamalai. None else but Sita alone knows of her love for Rama. Hence Sita's anxiety about the person who broke the bow is great. These phases have been described elaborately and in a touching manner. Tulasidas makes Rama break the bow in the immediate presence of Sita. Sita's friends know of her love for Rama, and Rama's love for Sita is known to the sage Vishwamitra and Lakshmana.

9. *Dasharatha's Arrival:*

Kambar: When Rama had broken the bow, information is sent to Dasharatha. He starts for Mithila with all the queens, and the army of chariots, elephants, horses and men, and all the other paraphernelia for the long happy journey. The journey is portrayed at great length in five long chapters, which include the description of nature, drinking, dancing, singing, bathing, merry making etc.[178].

After Dasharatha's arrival Rama's marriage is blissfully solomnised with Sita. Then and there follow the marriages of Bharata with Mandavi, Lakshmana with Urmila and Shatrughna with Shrutikirti, the three brides being the daughters of Kushadhwaja, the brother of Janaka. Vishwamitra retires to the forest.

Tulasidas: The description of Dasharatha's journey is short. Sita exhibits a little of her supernatural power. She calls for the Eight-Siddhis from the heaven, and assigns them the duty of receiving the bridegroom's party with pomp and grandeur.[179] The party is provided with celestial comforts and pleasures.[180] All take it to be the arrangement of Janaka and praise him. But Rama understands the secret and feels happy.[181]

178. *Ibid.*, (1-13 to 17).
179. 'Ram Charit Manas' (1-339-4).
180. *Ibid.*, (1-339).
181. *Ibid.*, (1-340-2).

The descriptions of the poets are different, each unique in its own way.

10. *Parasurama's Discomfiture*:

Kambar: After hearing about the great prowess of Rama and his breaking of the Shiva's bow, Parashurama 'the awe-inspiring sworn enemy of the Kshatriyas', comes like a storm and stands before the returning bridal party of Dasharatha with the four newly wedded couples. Dasharatha tries his level best to pacify the frowning sage, but with no effect. Dasharatha faints.[182] Parashurama straightaway goes to Rama and relates the history of the bows of Shiva and Vishnu, says that the one broken by him had already become weak and defective and challenges Rama to bend his bow which originally belonged to Vishnu. Rama takes up the challenge, bends the bow, ties up the string, sets an arrow and drawing the same asks for an object, for the arrow cannot be put back unused.[183] Now, wisdom dawns upon Parashurama and paying tributes to Rama, he offers all the power acquired through his penance as target. Rama shoots at it[184] and Parashurama leaves the place for further penance, realising that the one whom he met was none else but the incarnation of Vishnu himself. Then Dasharatha regains his lost consciousness, feels extremely happy and sheds tears of joy.[185] Now appears Varuna, the god of Rain, to whom Rama entrusts the bow for safe custody.[186] All reach Ayodhya. On the advice of Dasharatha, Bharata leaves for his maternal uncle's place with Shatrughna.[187]

Tulasidas: Immediately after Sita garlands Rama, the evil-minded kings create disturbance shouting:

> "Carry off Sita, and seize and bind the princes! He won't get what he wants merely by breaking the bow; who shall marry the princess while we are alive? And if Videha give them any aid, vanquish him in battle as well as the two princes".[188]

182. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (1-22-24).
183. *Ibid.*, (1-22-36).
184. *Ibid.*, (1-22-39).
185. *Ibid.*, (1-22-42, 43).
186. *Ibid.*, (1-22-45).
187. *Ibid.*, (1-22-49).
188. 'Ram Charit Manas' (1-299-2, 3).

But the good kings feel ashamed of their behaviour and dissuade them. Sita is afraid of the commotion and goes to the queen. Rama returns to the sage 'silently dwelling on Sita's love..[189]

Now comes Parashurama hearing the huge sound of the breaking of the Shiva's bow. All the kings are afraid of him[190] and shrink back. Janaka comes and bows before him and calls Sita to show her reverence to the sage.[191] Then comes the sage Vishwamitra with Rama and Lakshmana who bow at his feet. Janaka tells him all that happened. Parashurama pointedly asks with fury about the person who broke the bow of Shiva. Rama mildly replies that it must only be one of his servants. Parashurama says angrily that the one who broke it is an enemy like the other Sahasrabahu, and wants him to come out of the crowd lest all the kings should be killed.[192]

Lakshmana replies that he had broken many bows in his childhood. Parashurama gets angry over him, but he goes on talking that the mistake is only on the bow which broke at the mere touch of Rama.[193] Rama signals Lakshmana into silence, but finding the sage again getting furious, Lakshmana says that 'the broken bow cannot be joined.'[194] Rama throws a rebuking look and Lakshmana cools down,[195] but continues to smile at the angry sage who asks Janaka to take him away from his sight. Lakshmana laughs and says:

> "Shut your eyes and there'll be no one to be seen!"[196]

Then Parashurama turns towards Rama, when he owns that it is he who broke the bow. With extreme anger the sage tells Rama raising his axe:

> "Give me satisfaction in battle, or give up the right to be called Rama."[197]

Rama requests him to take him as his disciple and avoid fight, for he is in every way superior to himself. Parashurama does not

189. *Ibid.*, (1-300-3).
190. *Ibid.*, (1-302-1).
191. *Ibid.*, (1-302-2).
192. *Ibid.*, (1-304-1, 2, 3).
193. *Ibid.*, (1-305-2).
194. *Ibid.*, (1-311-1).
195. *Ibid.*, (1-311).
196. *Ibid.*, (1-313-4).
197. *Ibid.*, (1-314-1).

yield but asks him to bend and string his bow of Vishnu. The bow itself goes to Rama to Parashurama's astonishment.[198] The sage sings the greatness of Rama and retires to forest.[199]

Now comes Dasharatha, and the marriage of Rama and Sita is solomnised. On the bidding of Vasishtha, the marriages of Bharata, Lakshmana and Shatrughna also were celebrated with Mandavi, Urmila and Shrutikirti respectively, the daughters of Kushadhwaja, the brother of Janaka.

The main points to be noted in this picture as depicted by Kambar and Tulasidas are:-

(a) Kambar's Parashurama arrives after the marriage when Dasharatha with the newly married four couples is returning to Ayodhya.

Tulasi's Parashurama reaches the place of Swayamvara immediately after Sita garlands Rama.

(b) In Kambar, Vishwamitra leaves Mithila after the matrimony[200] and is not present when Parashurama comes. Dasharatha is present.

In Tulasi, Vishwamitra is present and not Dasharatha.

(c) In Kambar, Lakshmana has no place in this scene.

In Tulasi, Lakshmana plays an important role, mocks at Parashurama and adds to his fury.

(d) In Kambar, Rama receives Parashurama's bow from him, strings it and shoots at his accumulated power of penance.

In Tulasi, the bow itself moves into Rama's hands which is enough to make Parashurama realise Rama's supremacy, obviating the need for Rama shooting at him.

Miscellaneous:

An identical deviation from Valmiki and Adhyatma Ramayanas by Kambar and Tulasidas is the meeting of Dasharatha and Vishwamitra at Mithila.

198. *Ibid.*, (1-317-4).
199. *Ibid.*, (1-318-4).
200. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (1-22-1).

In Kambar, the life history of Vishwamitra is related in 46 stanzas by Satananda Rishi to Rama immediately after the arrival of the sage with the two princes, whereas in Tulasi references only are made in two places, each in a line that the life history of the sage was related once by Vasishtha[201] and again by Vamadeva.[202]

201. Ram Charit Manas (1-393-3).
202. *Ibid.*, (1-395-1).

II—AYODHYA KANDA

1. *Dasharatha's Desire*:

Kambar: Dasharatha finds one grey hair near his ear reminding him of his old age.[1] He desires to abdicate in favour of Rama.[2] He is also anxious to secure relief from the cycle of birth and death[3] by doing a penance in the forest.

Tulasidas: Dasharatha is reminded of his old age by the gray hairs near his ear. Immediately he wishes to make Rama regent.[4] He cares not whether his body lingers or departs.[5]

Neither in Valmiki, nor in Adhyatma nor in Tulasi Ramayan Dasharatha's desire to retire to the forest is mentioned.

2. *Counsel to Rama*:

Kambar: Vasishtha is sent to Rama to give him counsel. The Royal sage informs Rama of his proposed coronation the very next day and gives him (in fifteen stanzas) learned advice for the conduct of administration.[6] Rama receives it with humility and agrees to be crowned as it is the wish and the order of his father.

Tulasidas: In the Adhyatma Ramayana, Dasharatha sends Vasishtha to give Rama necessary counsel. The sage informs Rama of his installation the very next day and advises him (in half a stanza)[7] what he should do.

The poet says:

"In Rama's heart was nothing but dismay. 'All we brothers' he thought, 'were born together, we have eaten together, slept together and together played our boyish games; together we had our ears pierced, were invested with the sacred thread and married—all these ceremonies we have enjoyed at one and the same time. This is one blot on a

1. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (2-1-2).
2. *Ibid.*, (2-1-23).
3. *Ibid.*, (2-1-33).
4. 'Ram Charit Manas' (2-3-4).
5. *Ibid.*, (2-5-3).
6. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (2-2-7 to 21).
7. 'Ram Charit Manas' (2-11-2).

spotless race that only the eldest should be installed, and not his brothers too."[8]

In Valmiki Ramayana it is Dasharatha himself who instructs Rama about the conduct of administration.[9]

3. *Manthara's Reaction*:

Kambar: Hearing the news of the coronation of Rama, the hunch-backed Manthara recalls Rama as a boy shooting mud balls on her hunch[10] and wants to take vengeance. She goes to her mistress Kaikeyi and corrupts her mind.

Tulasi: As in Adhyatma Ramayana,[11] Saraswati, the goddess of Learning, is forced by the gods,[12] much against her wish[13] to spoil the mind of Manthara.[14]

Valmiki gives no reason for Manthara's act.

4. *Kaikeyi's Conversion*:

Kambar: The change of mind is only due to the ill-advice of Manthara.[15] There is however a suggestion of divine delusion.[16]

Tulasi: It is also due to the influence of divine delusion[17] as in Adhyatma Ramayana.[18]

No such influence is stated in Valmiki Ramayana.

5. *The Two Boons*:

Kambar: At the instigation of Manthara, Kaikeyi persistently demands the two boons from Dasharatha threatening to commit suicide.[19] Mindful of the evil consequences of her suicide, the king in despair utters:

"I grant thee even this request; let Ram
To the jungles be exiled, I shall to heaven

8. *Ibid.*, (2-11-2 to 4).
9. 'Valmiki Ramayana' (1-3).
10. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (2-2-41).
11. 'Adhyatma Ramayana' (2-2-44, 45).
12. 'Ram Charit Manas' (2-12-4).
13. *Ibid.*, (2-13-3).
14. *Ibid.*, (2-13).
15. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (2-2-77).
16. 'Manthirai Soozhchi'—P. Thirukoodasundaram, p. 13.
17. 'Ram Charit Manas' (2-17).
18. 'Adhyatma Ramayana' (2-2-45).
19. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (2-3-42).

Depart, and swim ye-Bharata and thou—
Dishonour's perennial stream for ev'r and ev'r,"[20]

and swoons on his bed. Next morning Sumantra is called by Vasishtha.[21]

Tulasi: Dasharatha tells Kaikeyi that he would grant the first boon, viz., her son getting the throne,[22] but when she insists on the second also viz., exile of Rama to forest for fourteen years,[23] he merely says:

"Now do whatever seems good to you; only hide your face and keep out of my sight,"[24]

and remains awake throughout night lying on the ground pale in an agony of woe, 'like a lotus turn up by the root', till Sumantra comes next day morning.[25]

Dasharatha does not say so in Valmiki and Adhyatma Ramayanas. He just falls on the ground unconscious.

6. *Dasharatha and Kaikeyi's command to Rama*:

Kambar: Kaikeyi sends for Rama through Sumantra, tells him of the two boons obtained by her as the King's commands.[26] Rama gladly receives them and returns after 'bowing down at her feet and saluting the direction where his father was lying unconscious!'[27] Rama does not even see the king.

Tulasi: When sent for by Kaikeyi through Sumantra, Rama goes and sees the king fallen on the ground 'in the most wretched plight, like that of an aged elephant when he falls terrified at the sight of a lioness',[28] and Kaikeyi is nearby. He asks her the reason for the agony of his father, to which she replies that the heart of the king is grieved on account of his extreme love to him. She informs him of the two boons and asks him to "obey his command

20. *Ibid.*, (2-3-44).
21. *Ibid.*, (2-3-79).
22. 'Ram Charit Manas' (2-32-4).
23. *Ibid.*, (2-34).
24. *Ibid.*, (2-37-3).
25. *Ibid.*, (2-39-3, 4).
26. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (2-3-107).
27. *Ibid.*, (2-4-1).
28. 'Ram Charit Manas' (2-40).

if you can, and so put an end to the dire distress of the king."[29] Rama feels sorry for his father's distress.

Meanwhile the king regains consciousness and learning about Rama's arrival, repeatedly embraces him, gazing at him with tears[30] and praying within himself to God to somehow stop Rama from going to the forest.[31] Rama tells his father that he should not yield to grief over this simple affair,[32] and requests him to give him leave with cheerful heart. He departs without getting any reply from his father.[33]

In Valmiki and Adhyatma Ramayanas also Rama sees the king. It is in the immediate presence of the king that Kaikeyi informs Rama of the command.

7. *Kaushalya's Reaction:*

Kambar: Rama goes direct to his mother after receiving the king's command through Kaikeyi. He informs her first of the coronation of Bharata.[34] She disapproves, but being a command of her husband, she asks him to accept it.[35] Then Rama informs her of the second boon to which she could not reconcile herself and says that she would request the king to revoke it, and goes to his place.[36]

Tulasi: Rama straightaway informs her of the second boon[37], and the whole affair is related to her by a minister's son.[38] Kaushalya first resents but finally agrees to both saying:

> "If it be only your father's will, my son, then go not, for you should put your mother first; but if both your father and your mother bid you go to the forest, the woods are equal to a hundred Avadhs".[39]

29. *Ibid.,* (2-41).
30. *Ibid.,* (2-45-2).
31. *Ibid.,* (2-46-2).
32. *Ibid.,* (2-46-4).
33. *Ibid.,* (2-47-3).
34. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (2-4-4).
35. *Ibid.,* (2-4-6).
36. *Ibid.,* (2-4-28).
37. 'Ram Charit Manas' (2-54-3).
38. *Ibid.,* (2-55).
39. *Ibid.,* (2-57-1).

Here by 'mother', Kaushalya means Kaikeyi herself! She later resigns herself to destiny.[40]

In Valmiki and Adhyatma Ramayanas, reference to the exile to forest is made first by Rama to his mother, and she ultimately gives her consent as it is the command of the king. In Kamba Ramayanam, Kaushalya does not give consent to his going to the forest but when she goes to the king and expresses her feelings, she is helpless seeing the condition of her husband, Kaikeyi and others, and is overcome by her feelings for the king, his good name and Rama.[41]

8. *Story of Shravanakumar:*

Kambar: Kaushalya helps the king to regain consciousness. He then relates the past story of his shooting his 'Shabdabedhi' arrow towards a sound without seeing the object and unintentionally killing a youth named Shravanakumar, son of blind parents.[42] Kaushalya becomes unconscious thinking of the inevitable evil consequence.

This is related long before Rama, Sita and Lakshmana leave for the forest.

Tulasi: When Sumantra returns after leaving Rama, Sita and Lakshmana in the forest, and informs the king of their departure, he recapitulates the story of Shravanakumar and the poet says in a line:

> "The king recalled the blind ascetic's curse and related the whole story to Kaushalya".[43]

Valmiki,[44] and Adhyatma[45] Ramayanas mention the story of Shravanakumar after Rama, Sita and Lakshmana leave for the forest.

9. *Lakshmana's Reaction:*

Kambar: Lakshmana's fury reaches its zenith when he hears of the grant of boons to Kaikeyi and he comes out like the forest fire.

40. *Ibid.,* (2-283-2).
41. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (2-4-54).
42. *Ibid.,* (2-4-74 to 90).
43. 'Ram Charit Manas' (2-156-2).
44. 'Valmiki Ramayana' (2-63).
45. 'Adhyatma Ramayana' (2-7).

"When Lakshman learnt that Kaikeyi had the pledge,
Revoked of Dasharatha, and forced exile
On Ram, he rose indignant like the fire
That doth on Dissolution's day all things
Consume. His eyes shot flame; his front shown bright,
Like noon day sun, and scorched his very hair;
And sweat suffused his limbs; his breath came in
And went tempestuous and terrific
He looked like Adi Shesh himself in all
His fury roused!"[46]

Challenging all men and gods, he cries aloud laughing:

"I stand prepared to lighten Mother Earth
Extinguish all the sons of guilt, and heap
Their lifeless corpses up to heaven, and crown
My Ram as Ayodh's king. Whoe'er desires
To offer battle, let them come! Be't gods
Or Nagas, Vidyadhars, men or ev'n the Three
Supreme who challenge me, I let no woman
Usurp the throne in this my sacred land".[47]

Rama goes to him like 'the dark cloud to quench the wind-fanned flaming forest fire'[48] and asks for the reason of his standing as an armed warrior ready to wage war. Lakshmana replies:

"I have vowed to crown thee king, * * * * * * *. Even if it is the gods that stand in the way, they all shall burn in the fire of my wrath. When I hold the bow in this hand, even the gods will not dare to oppose me. If any oppose, they will be but targets for my fiery darts. And I will give thee the crown of all the earth! Deign to receive it at my hands".[49]

Rama explains to him that all this was due to the action of the unavoidable destiny.[50] Lakshmana throws a challenge to the destiny itself and asks Rama to see the strength of his bow which is destiny to the destiny itself:[51]

"I know not father, mother, or lord: thyself alone art master, mother, father, all to me. Thou hast learnt to give away what is thine: now see me give back thy own to thee".[52]

46. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (2-4-115, 116).
47. *Ibid.*, (2-4-121, 122).
48. *Ibid.*, (2-4-125).
49. *Ibid.*, (2-4-131).
50. *Ibid.*, (2-4-134).
51. *Ibid.*, (2-4-135).
52. *Ibid.*, (2-4-137).

Then Rama appeals to his heart and asks him whether he proposes to kill the just and faultless Bharata, virtuous father and fight with our mother.[53] Lakshmana now has nothing else but to say desperately:

"Let enemies insult thee in their pride.
Meekly I'll bear it all. Am not I born
To bear the burden of these idle arms
And pompous bow, impotent to avenge
Our injuries?"[54]

Thus his overflowing anger is subdued by his boundless regard and affection for Rama, but when the hermit's coarse weeds are brought to Rama by Kaikeyi's maiden, he again bursts out:

"Behold, there stands he who is born to wear
All that she sends in the hardness of her heart;
And me behold, whose fate it is to look
Impotently on all these rending sights!"[55]

When Rama puts on the dress of weeds, Lakshmana speaks not a word but silently throws off his royal dress, puts on weeds and is about to take leave of his mother when Rama asks him to remain at Ayodhya and not to follow him to the forest, to which Lakshmana replies:

"Fishes live not if waters fail; and all
That lives must die if Mother Earth give way.
Now tell me, brother, on what do Sita's life
And mine depend[56] * * * * * *
* * * * * * * Thy words that bid me stay,
While thou do'st Ayodh leave behind—these words
Are crueller far than those that bade me calm
My wrath against thy enemies".[57]

Rama could not but accede to this request and looks at Lakshmana with eyes full of tears of love in silence.[58]

Tulasi: Lakshmana hears of the news of Rama's exile only when Sita had convinced Rama of the inevitability of her accompanying him and the same was agreed to by Rama and Kau-

53. *Ibid.*, (2-4-139).
54. *Ibid.*, (2-4-140).
55. *Ibid.*, (2-4-149).
56. *Ibid.*, (2-4-157).
57. *Ibid.*, (2-4-159).
58. *Ibid.*, (2-4-161).

shalya.[59] He runs with eyes full of tears to Rama and clasping his feet in agony, says:

> "I know no guru, father or mother save yourself—believe me—
> Lord, I speak in all sincerity! All the love in the world,
> all these that are mine are centred in yourself alone",[60]

though Rama tries to stop him at Ayodhya to serve their father and mothers, specially in the absence of Bharata and Shatrughna.[61] Rama feeling the pulse of Lakshmana asks him to take the permission of his mother,[62] which he accordingly gets immediately,[63] and returns to Rama happily. Then Rama, Sita and Lakshmana go to the king, seeing whom the king is greatly pained. The king tries again for the last time to stop them from going to the forest, but with no effect, for Kaikeyi immediately brings the dress of weeds[64] which Rama happily wears. Sita and Lakshmana also wear the weeds, and all the three start for the forest.[65]

Kambar takes advantage of this occasion for portraying the fury of Lakshmana as Tulasi has made use of Janaka's observation during the swayamvara.

In Kambar, Lakshmana hears the news of the grant of the boon earlier than Sita, and his accompanying Rama to the forest is assured before Sita persuades Rama to take her to the forest, whereas the order in Tulasi is the reverse. In Valmiki Ramayana, Lakshmana's anger is described at great length,[66] and Rama's consent is given to Lakshmana after Sita.[67] In Adhyatma Ramayana, Lakshmana's fury on this occasion is stated briefly but in a pointed manner,[68] and consent is given to Lakshmana first and then to Sita. This shows that here Kambar is nearer to Valmiki and Tulasidas to Adhyatma Ramayana.

10. *Sumitra's advice:*

Kambar: Rama softens the stormy anger of Lakshmana and goes with him to Sumitra and informs her that he was going to

59. 'Ram Charit Manas' (2-71-1).
60. *Ibid.,* (2-73-2, 3).
61. *Ibid.,* (2-72-1).
62. *Ibid.,* (2-74-1).
63. *Ibid.,* (2-75-4).
64. *Ibid.,* (2-80-1).
65. *Ibid.,* (2-80-4 and 2-80).
66. 'Valmiki Ramayana' (2-23).
67. *Ibid.,* (2-30, 31).
68. 'Adhyatma Ramayana' (2-4-14, 15).

the forest as required by the boon. Sumitra is filled with unbearable grief, 'but consoled by Rama she soon recognises that what must be must not be wept over by endured'.[69]

Then, after receiving the dress of weeds brought by Kaikeyi's maiden, Lakshmana goes to his mother to get her consent. Sumitra advises Lakshmana as follows:

> "Consider Rama as Dasharatha's self and look upon Sita as thy own mother, myself; the forest wild shall be to thee as pleasant as Ayodhya; I bless thee, son, depart with a joyful heart".[70]

She continues in unforgettable terms:

> "You should wait on your brother as a devoted servant would do, and not attend on him as a brother. Follow his lead wherever his feet may roam and return hither in his company. But if by some mishap he is unable to return safe, end your existence earlier".[71]

Then both leave the place in hermit's weeds when she stares vacantly while the breast that had fed Lakshmana in his infancy droops down out of the inexpressible sorrow.[72] Later Lakshmana gets the consent of Rama.

Tulasi: When Lakshmana asks for the consent of his mother, she is stunned to hear the news and beats her head but thinking this is to be a bad time, she consoles herself and calmly advises Lakshmana:

> "My son, the princess of Videha is your mother, and Rama your father who loves you most dearly; and there is Avadh wherever Rama dwells; wherever is sunlight there is day. If Sita and Rama go to the woods, there is no reason why you should stay at Avadh.[74] * * * * * * * It is your good fortune that Rama goes to the forest. * * * * * * Do them service in thought, word and deed".[75]

69. 'Kamba Ramayanam—A Study'—V. V. S. Aiyar, p. 10.
70. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (2-4-151).
71. *Ibid.*, (2-4-152).
72. *Ibid.*, (2-4-152) Alternate reading of the last half line of the stanza.
73. *Ibid.*, (2-4-161).
74. 'Ram Charit Manas' (2-75-1, 2).
75. *Ibid.*, (2-76-2).

So advising, she gives her consent.

Sumitra's advice to Lakshmana as described by Kambar and Tulasidas is an identical deviation from Valmiki[76] and Adhyatma Ramayanas wherein Sumitra has been here practically neglected.[77]

In Kambar, Lakshmana gets the consent of his mother first and then Rama's whereas in Tulasi, he gets first the consent of Rama who asks him to get the consent of his mother also.[78]

11. *Sita and the Exile:*

Kambar: Rama in the garb of weeds goes to Sita who is shocked. Rama explains the position and asks her to remain at home. This pains her extremely. Rama says that the forest with barren mountains would be too hot for her delicate body and lotus feet to bear. Sita replies:

"She grieved not that her lord his kingdom left,
And throne; but the words he spoke—'grieve not, my love,
I take thy leave'—did send an arrow through
Her heart. 'Right holy's thy purpose to obey
Thy mother's commands', she said. 'But, lord, thy word
To me to stay at home when thou dost leave
An exile for the wilds unknown, that word
Has pierced my heart'. Said Rama, 'Thy tender feet
Are not made to tread the stony wilds that burn
Like molten wax'. 'But can the stony wilds',
Said she, 'burn more than separation from
My Ram'?"[79]

So saying she enters her apartments, changes her dress to a coarse one suitable for the forest life and silently stands by the side of Rama to accompany him.[80] Rama is struck dumb but says later that her coming would give him trouble. Sita retorts whether her separation alone would give him pleasure.[81] Rama could not but take her with him.

76. 'Valmiki Ramayana' (2-31, 40).
77. *Ibid.*, (2-31)—The reference is only to friends and well wishers. No special mention of Sumitra, not even her name, has been brought in here.
'Adhyatma Ramayana' (2-4-50, 51, 52). Reference not even to friends or well-wishers.
78. 'Ram Charit Manas' (2-74-1).
79. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (2-4-224, 226, 228).
80. *Ibid.*, (2-4-230).
81. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (2-4-234).

Tulasi: When Rama had met and consoled his mother Kaushalya, Sita, hearing of the sad news, goes to her mother-in-law and sits at her feet greatly grieved with the head down and eyes full of tears, thinking, whether she would be able to accompany Rama with her body or only soul would follow him,[82] and suggesting that she would like to accompany Rama. Kaushalya is pained to know of her wish and says that she is one to whom even a monkey in a picture has been a source of fear,[83] and it would be a relief should she remain at home. Rama also advises her to stay at home and do service to her mother-in-law, with a warning that her persistence might lead her to trouble[84] and that the forest would be very hot, very chill, too rainy and also stormy with very many other indescribable difficulties including thieves of women and men.[85] Sita falls at the feet of Rama and says:

"There is no sorrow in the world like separation from a husband,[86] and without you even the heaven would turn to be a hell.[87] As a body bereft of life, as a river that has no water, so lord, is a wife without her husband. With you, my husband, all is happiness, if only I behold your face like the pure autumn moon."[88]

She persists that she must accompany Rama. Finally she says:

"You may leave me at Avadh if you think that I will keep my life till you return".[89]

She says further as if tauntingly:

"Am I delicate and my lord fit for the forest? Should you face austerity and I live in luxury?"[90]

Rama thinks that his separation may really bring death to her[91] and asks her to accompany him and be quick.[92] Then both take leave of Kaushalya.

82. 'Ram Charit Manas' (2-59-2).
83. *Ibid.*, (2-61-2).
84. *Ibid.*, (2-63-2).
85. *Ibid.*, (2-64-2).
86. *Ibid.*, (2-65-4).
87. *Ibid.*, (2-65).
88. *Ibid.*, (2-66-4 and 2-66).
89. *Ibid.*, (2-67).
90. *Ibid.*, (2-68-4).
91. *Ibid.*, (2-69-1).
92. *Ibid.*, (2-69-2).

Valmiki has devoted five chapters for describing the stand of Sita[93] and Kaushalya does not come into the picture. In Adhyatma Ramayana also there is no reference to Kaushalya.[94] Thus Kambar is nearer to Valmiki but Tulasidas differs from both Valmiki and Adhyatma Ramayanas.

As has already been stated, Kambar's Lakshmana gets first consent and then Sita, whereas the order of Tulasidas is the reverse.

12. *Dasharatha and 'the Departure'*:

Kambar: When the three get ready to go to the forest, they go to Dasharatha's palace, and request the mothers to take care of the king, and leave Ayodhya by a chariot driven by Sumantra followed by the people of the city.[95]

Tulasi: The three go to the King's palace.[96] Sumantra informs the king that Rama, Sita and Lakshmana have come to take leave. The king is struck dumb. Rama requests the king permission to leave to the forest. Dasharatha tries his best to keep them at Ayodhya, at least Sita, but all in vain.[97]

Kaikeyi brings the dress of weeds. Rama dresses himself in the hermit's garb. The king falls unconscious.[98] The three start for the forest leaving all fainted.[99] Rama explains to the people how it was inevitable that he should go to the forest, and the three leave the place with the blessings of all. A bad omen occurs in Lanka at the time.[100]

As Rama, Sita and Lakshmana leave, the king regains consciousness and tells Sumantra to take them in a chariot, show them the forest for about four days and return, with them all.[101] He adds that if the two brothers do not return, truthful and determined as they are, he should at least bring back Sita advising her at an opportune moment i.e., when she gets frightened about the forest. She may remain for some time at her father's place whereafter

93. 'Valmiki Ramayana' (2-26 to 30).
94. 'Adhyatma Ramayana' (2-4-51 to 80).
95. 'Kamba Ramayana' (2-4-240).
96. 'Ram Charit Manas' (2-77-1).
97. *Ibid.*, (2-79-1, 2).
98. *Ibid.*, (2-80-4).
99. *Ibid.*, (2-80).
100. *Ibid.*, (2-82-2).
101. *Ibid.*, (2-82).

she will be of help to him at Ayodhya. The king asks for Rama, Sita and Lakshmana to be shown to him[102] and again falls unconscious.

Kambar has adopted an important deviation here. Rama and Dasharatha do not meet or even see each other. In Valmiki there is an elaborate discussion between Dasharatha and Rama occupying a whole chapter.[103] The king even suggests that Rama may bind him up and usurp the kingdom, which Rama naturally does not accept. The king requests him to stay at least for a day, which again is rejected. Rama requests the king to keep his mother Kaushalya happy lest she should die.[104] Then the three get into a chariot driven by Sumantra and start. The king comes out and asks Sumantra to stop, but Rama instructs him to drive off.

In Adhyatma Ramayana, the three meet Dasharatha[105] who was with Kaikeyi. She gives dresses of weeds separately to Rama, Sita and Lakshmana,[106] which they wear. Then the king asks Sumantra to bring for them a chariot in which Sita gets in first and then Rama and Lakshmana after going round the king, and asks Sumantra to drive. The king asks him to stay for a while, but on Rama's word Sumantra drives the chariot away, and the king falls unconscious.[107]

Thus in neither of the three, do we find the king asking Sumantra to return with the three or at least Sita as we find in Tulasi Ramayan.

13. *Sumantra and 'the Departure'*:

Kambar: The three reach one shady place a few miles away and they meet some sages. The people of Ayodhya overtake them there. Rama advises Sumantra at night to drive back towards Ayodhya to create an impression in the sleeping people that the three had returned to Ayodhya so that they may not follow them further.[108] Sumantra feels grieved. Rama expresses his inability to return and asks him to take care of all at Ayodhya with the

102. *Ibid.*, (2-83-1 to 4).
103. 'Valmiki Ramayana' (2-34).
104. *Ibid.*, (2-38).
105. 'Adhyatma Ramayana' (2-4-86).
106. *Ibid.*, (2-5-35).
107. *Ibid.*, (2-5-46).
108. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (2-5-18, 19).

help of Vasishtha and see that the king loves Bharata as he has been loving him, and look after the happiness of his mothers.[109]

Then Sita says:

"To king and aunts respects mine render first,
And tell my loving sisters three to tend
My golden starling and my parrot green".[110]

Her innocent conduct creates a painful surprise in Rama and Sumantra. When asked by Sumantra for a message, Lakshmana says:

> "What message should I offer to that faithful king who yielded the rightful kingdom of Rama to an unrighteous woman?[111] However, go and tell him to carefully keep up his life which has not yet gone to the other world.[112] Tell Bharata and Shatrughna that we are not born with them and I am feeling quite fit".[113]

Rama now calms him, and Sumantra goes back and tells the king of Rama's departure and instantaneously the king dies.[114]

Tulasi: The three go in the chariot and stop at the banks of River Tamasa on the first night.[115] The people of Ayodhya had also followed, and would not return even on the advice of Rama. All the people fall asleep due to tiresomeness and partly also due to the 'delusion of the gods'. At midnight Rama advises Sumantra to so drive the chariot as not to leave any track of the wheels on the ground, as there is no other way out.[116] The people return to Ayodhya out of sheer despair. The chariot reaches Shringaverpur and they prostrate before the sacred river Ganges.[117] Rama relates the greatness of the river. All have a bath in it, and are relieved of their tiresomeness.[118] Then Sumantra with Rama, Sita and Lakshmana receives the offerings of Guha and sleeps that night with them at the request of Lakshmana.[119] Next morning Sumantra

109. *Ibid.*, (2-5-33 to 38).
110. *Ibid.*, (2-5-40).
111. *Ibid.*, (2-5-43).
112. *Ibid.*, (2-5-44).
113. *Ibid.*, (2-5-45).
114. *Ibid.*, (2-5-90).
115. 'Ram Charit Manas' (2-85).
116. *Ibid.*, (2-86-4).
117. *Ibid.*, (2-88-1).
118. *Ibid.*, (2-88-2, 3).
119. *Ibid.*, (2-91-1).

looks with tearful eyes at Rama and Lakshmana who are coiling their hair into knots on their head with the milk of the banyan.[120] Sumantra tries to take them back or at least Sita, as desired by Dasharatha but in vain. Rama asks him to tell his father not to worry himself. Lakshmana utters some harsh words but Rama restrains him and requests Sumantra not to tell that to his father.[121] Sita says that her happiness lies entirely in being with her husband and requests Sumantra to tell the parents of her lord not to grieve at all for her.[122] Then Rama insists on Sumantra to return and himself goes to the banks of the Ganges.[123]

After seeing off Rama, Sita and Lakshmana, Guha returns and is surprised to find Sumantra still staying on where he was left.[124] Seeing Guha returning without Rama and others, he cries aloud 'Rama, Sita, Lakshman' and falls on the ground. Then Guha persuades Sumantra to return to Ayodhya with four of his trustworthy men.[125] Sumantra passes the day under a tree and enters Ayodhya in the dark.[126] He goes straight to the palace of Kaushalya where the king was, and relates all that happened.

In Valmiki Ramayana, Sumantra drives the chariot from Tamasa onwards at night. They reach Shringaverpur where they meet Guha. Next day the three cross the Ganges. Guha and Sumantra return. On the way back he hears that Rama had been to the Bharadwaja Ashrama and then to Chitrakoota. He reaches Ayodhya in the evening, and relates everything.[127]

In Adhyatma Ramayana, the chariot is driven at night from Tamasa towards Ayodhya on Rama's advice and then into the forest so that the people following them may not be able to find the way out.[128] They meet Guha who takes them the next day in a boat across the river Ganges, and Sumantra returns to Ayodhya in the evening covering his face with cloth and shedding tears.[129]

120. *Ibid.*, (2-95-2).
121. *Ibid.*, (2-97-2, 3).
122. *Ibid.*, (2-99-3, 4 and 2-99).
123. *Ibid.*, (2-101-1).
124. *Ibid.*, (2-143-3).
125. *Ibid.*, (2-144 and 2-145-1).
126. *Ibid.*, (2-148-3).
127. 'Valmiki Ramayana' (2-50, 52, 58).
128. 'Adhyatma Ramayana' (2-5-57).
129. *Ibid.*, (2-7-1).

Here it may be noted that:

(a) In Kambar, Rama advises Sumantra to return to Ayodhya from the shady place where they stayed for the first night, whereas in the other three Ramayanas, they go up to the Ganges and Sumantra also meets Guha and spends another night with them. Kambar's deviation is meant to delude the people into believing that Rama also had gone back in the chariot to Ayodhya.[130] Next morning the people follow the track of the chariot wheels and reach Ayodhya. There they find that Rama had not returned but hear the sad news of the death of the king on account of Rama's departure.

(b) The messages of Rama, Sita and Lakshmana through Sumantra to Ayodhya are elaborately narrated only in Kambar. Sita's innocence is a special feature in Kambar as also the fury of Lakshmana.

(c) Sumantra's request for their return or at least of Sita as per the wish of the king is mentioned only by Tulasidas.

(d) In Tulasi, Sumantra stays at the banks of the Ganges till Guha returns, whereas in Kambar, Sumantra returns on the first night itself after leaving Rama in the shady place in the forest on the suggestion of Rama. In Valmiki and Adhyatma Ramayanas the treatment is different.

Kambar and Tulasidas have shown originality here by deviating from Valmiki and Adhyatma Ramayanas.

14. *Death of Dasharatha:*

Kambar: A dramatic touch is given by the poet by bringing Dasharatha's death instantaneously after listening from Sumantra about the departure of Rama to the forest. As soon as the king hears that Rama has gone, his life also goes out of his body.[131]

Tulasi: The king relates the story of Shravanakumar to Kaushalya only after hearing from Sumantra of Rama's departure to the forest and dies repeating the name of Rama.[132]

130. 'Kamba Ramayana' (2-5-82, 83).

131. *Ibid.*, (2-5-60).

132. 'Ram Charit Manas' (2-156).

In Valmiki and Adhyatma Ramayanas the king's death occurs only after Sumantra intimates him of Rama's departure and after he relates the story of Shravanakumar to Kaushalya. Kambar's touch is unique.

15. *Rama and Guha Crossing the Ganges — Arrival at Chitrakoota*:

Kambar: After a detailed description of the bath of Rama and Sita in the Ganges and the feast offered by the sages, Kambar brings Guha who is the chief of one thousand boatmen,[133] to the Ashrama of Rama hearing of his arrival. Guha first takes Lakshmana to be Rama.[134] Later, obtaining permission from Lakshmana, Guha with unbounded love goes to Rama, bows and submits his humble and selected offerings of honey and fish.[135] Rama signifies his acceptance of the offerings with a smile. Rama asks him to come next morning with a strong boat for crossing the Ganges. Guha is anxious to remain with him and is permitted. That night Lakshmana and Guha with all his people guard Rama and Sita. Next morning when Rama asks for a boat, Guha requests him to stay at his place for at least a day. Rama says that he will fulfil his desire on his way back.[136] Guha himself rows the boat across the Ganges.[137] Rama enquires for the way to Chitrakoota, when Guha offers to accompany Rama and be of service to him throughout.[138]

Rama is moved and he states with deep fraternal feelings:

"Thou art dear to me as life: and this my brother
Is brother to thee as well, and this fair one
Is kin to thee; and all the sea-girt earths
Is thine of right whilst I adventure on,
Thy duties doing. Happiness comes to us
Alone in the wake of misery. Grieve not
Therefore that now we part: We were but four
Before: to-day with thee we're brothers five
Attached one t'another with loving bonds.
Lakshmana, thy brother, is here to suffer all
For me . . . . .
Thy other brother Bharat is there to guard

133. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (2-6-28).
134. *Ibid.*, (2-6-39).
135. *Ibid.*, (2-6-42).
136. *Ibid.*, (2-6-63).
137. *Ibid.*, (2-6-65).
138. *Ibid.*, (2-6-69).

Our kindred in the north; now tell me who
But thee can guard our kindred here? Thy men,
Are not they mine? Then stay thou here and watch
O'er them till I return".[139]

Guha stays back, and the three in the order of Lakshmana, Sita and Rama[140] go ahead into the forest and meet Bharadwaja Rishi who wants them to stay with him[141] but Rama does not accede. They cross Jamuna in a boat built by Lakshmana himself,[142] go to Chitrakoota and stay in a cottage erected by Lakshmana.[143]

Tulasi: Hearing of Rama's arrival Guha comes with his kith and kin and offerings of fruits and roots.[144] He is the chief of boatmen. Rama affectionately enquires about his welfare, seating him adjacent. Guha invites Rama to his village, but Rama declines telling him of the orders of his father.[145]

The village folk abuse the parents who exiled Rama. The three with Sumantra rest for the night there, Lakshmana and Guha guarding them throughout night. Guha is grieved at the plight of Rama and Sita. Lakshmana consoles him saying that it is all due to destiny[146] and describes the greatness of Rama. Next morning Guha brings the milk of banyan and the two exiled princes tie their tufts like hermits.[147] Rama asks Sumantra to go back, and goes to the banks of the Ganges.

Now Rama asks a boatman[148] for his boat but he does not yield, saying:

"I know your hidden power. All say that the dust of your lotus feet is a kind of magic charm for making man. A rock touched it and became a beautiful woman; and wood is no harder than stone! If my boat becomes a hermit's wife, I shall lose my boat and my livelihood too. By this

139. *Ibid.,* (2-6-73 to 76).
140. *Ibid.,* (2-4-235).
141. *Ibid.,* (2-7-30).
142. *Ibid.,* (2-7-36).
143. *Ibid.,* (2-8-46 to 50).
144. 'Ram Charit Manas' (2-89-1).
145. *Ibid.,* (2-89-4).
146. *Ibid.,* (2-93-2, 3).
147. *Ibid.,* (2-95-2).
148. This boatman was not Guha, but some other having only one boat. See 'Manas Me Ram Katha'—Dr. Baldeo Prasad Mishra, p. 106.

ferry I support my whole family; I know no other means of living. If, my lord, you really want to cross the river, then bid me wash your lotus feet.[149] When I have washed your lotus feet, my lord, I will take you on board and I want no fee. By yourself and Dasharath I swear, O Rama, I tell you the whole truth. Lakshmana may shoot me with his arrows, but till I have washed your feet, merciful lord of Tulasidas, I will not take you across!"[150]

Hearing these words of the boatman, rough but saturated with devotion, the graceful Lord grants his request. The Ganges is crossed. Sita presents the boatman with a diamond ring,[151] but he totally declines to accept it, stating that he would receive no fee now and that on their return they may offer him anything. Rama blesses him with true devotion and asks him to return.[152]

Guha follows them. After a bath in the Ganges, Rama asks Guha also to return. Guha is grieved and offers to be taken with them for doing menial services. Rama embraces him and accepts his request.[153] Guha sends back all his men. With the friend Guha,[154] they reach Prayag, have a bath at the holy Triveni and perform obeisance to Shiva.[155] They meet Bharadwaja Rishi and go ahead. Now they come across an ascetic (who is supposed to be Agni or Hanuman or Tulasidas himself by modern scholars).[156] He comes in 'anchorite guise unknown to poets' devoted to Rama in thought, word and deed[157] and Rama embraces him. He falls at the feet of Lakshmana and puts the dust of Sita's feet on his head. Guha prostrates before the ascetic. Then Rama gives sound advice to Guha and asks him to return. So does Guha in perfect obedience.[158] The three go ahead with bare feet[159] when the clouds follow them offering shade.[160] The sweetness of Sita's

149. 'Ram Charit Manas' (2-101-2, 3, 4).
150. *Ibid.*, (2-101-Chand).
151. *Ibid.*, (2-103-2).
152. *Ibid.*, (2-103).
153. *Ibid.*, (2-105-4).
154. *Ibid.*, (2-105).
155. *Ibid.*, (2-107-3).
156. 'The Holy Lake of the Acts of Rama'—W. D. P. Hill, p. 206. Some consider this portion of the meeting of Rama and the ascetic as an interpolation.
157. 'Ram Charit Manas' (2-111-4).
158. *Ibid.*, (2-112).
159. *Ibid.*, (2-120-3).
160. *Ibid.*, (2-114).

talk with the village ladies is described.[161] They continue their journey into the forest with Rama in the front, Lakshmana behind and Sita in the middle.[162] Sita takes care to avoid the foot prints of Rama, and Lakshmana avoids the foot prints of both by going on the sides.[163] They meet Valmiki.[164] Rama relates how the queen Kaikeyi gave him the forest life[165] and asks the sage Valmiki to tell him of a proper place of residence during the exile. The sage offers an elaborate and devoted reply stating that he may live where he does not exist.[166] Then he suggests Chitrakoota. The three proceed there. The gods come as forest dwellers 'Kols and Kirats' with Indra as their chief,[167] and erect two beautiful huts, one big and another small. The three reside there.

Both the poets deviate from their main sources. In Valmiki Ramayana, Guha is a minor king and an old friend of Rama. Hearing of Rama's arrival, he comes with his ministers and relatives and meets Rama near Sringaverpur. Guha offers food and drink and other comforts but Rama rejects everything and takes only water brought by Lakshmana. They spend the night under a tree. Lakshmana and Guha keep watch and discuss past happenings. The next morning a boat is made ready by Guha and the three depart leaving behind Sumantra and Guha. After crossing the river they go into the forest with Lakshmana in front, Sita in the middle and Rama in the rear. In the evening they kill four sacred deers, eat their flesh[168] and take rest at night when Rama severely accuses Dasharatha and Kaikeyi, bitterly weeping. Lakshmana consoles him.[169] They go ahead, meet Bharadwaja Rishi who requests them to stay with him, but declining his request they cross Jamuna by a self-constructed boat and meet Valmiki himself and move to Chitrakoota. A hut is built by Lakshmana.[170] Here Lakshmana kills a black deer, bakes it

161. *Ibid.*, (2-118-1 to 4).
162. *Ibid.*, (2-124-1).
163. *Ibid.*, (2-124-3).
164. *Ibid.*, (2-125-3).
165. *Ibid.*, (2-126-4).
166. *Ibid.*, (2-128).
167. *Ibid.*, (2-134-4).
168. This is supposed to be an interpolation by certain scholars. See 'Shrimad Valmikiya Ramayan—Part I'—Pandit Gopal Sharma, p. 174.
169. 'Valmiki Ramayana' (2-53).
170. *Ibid.*, (2-56).

in fire and Rama performs the *Deva Yagya.* After leaving Ayodhya, they take only water for three days, fruits on the fourth day and reach Chitrakoota the fifth day.

The picture is somewhat different in Adhyatma Ramayana. Guha, the king of Nishadas and an old friend, meets Rama near Shringaverpur with fruits, honey and flowers in all devotion. Rama embraces him but declines the offerings. Lakshmana and Guha watch during the night and Lakshmana tells Guha that what has happened is the play of destiny.[171] Next morning Guha gets a good boat, himself rows and all cross the river. He requests Rama to take him along with him and adds that if this is not done, he would die.[172] Rama however advises him to return and embraces him. Then the three go to the Ashrama of Bharadwaja and next day cross the Jamuna by the boat improvised by the disciples of Bharadwaja. They come to Valmiki who relates his autobiography. Asked for a proper abode, Valmiki says:

"Oh Rama, you are every where and all is in you!"

Then he selects a spacious place, and has two houses constructed for them by his disciples. Here they live happily.[173]

The following points are noteworthy:

(a) In Kambar, Rama is unknown to Guha who even mistakes Lakshmana for Rama at first.[174] In Tulasi and the other two source works, Guha is a friend of Rama.

(b) In Kambar, he is an ordinary chieftain of boatmen but in Tulasi and other two works, he is a minor king known to Rama earlier.

(c) In Kambar, Guha offers Rama honey and fish but in Tulasi and other works he offers fruits, honey and roots. Kambar has apparently modelled Guha on the Tamil Shaiva Saint Kannappa Nayanar who offered similar things of his own liking to his deity.

(d) Kambar and Tulasidas have described Rama to be perfect vegetarian, as also Adhyatma Ramayana, but in Valmiki Ramayana he is shown to be non-vegetarian.

171. 'Adhyatma Ramayana' (2-6-5).
172. *Ibid.*, (2-6-24).
173. *Ibid.*, (2-6-89 to 92).
174. 'Chittira Ramayana'—P. Sri, 'Ananda Vikatan', Chapters 172 and 175.

(e) In Kambar, Guha himself rows the boat for crossing the Ganges whereas in Tulasi it is a different boatman who insists on Rama's feet being washed lest the dust should metamorphose the wooden boat into a human being. In Valmiki, Guha is a minor king, and he asks his men to row. In Adhyatma, Guha rows along with his men.

(f) In Kambar, Guha is treated by Rama as his own brother because of his sincere devotion. Similarly Bharata and Kaushalya bear the same feelings later. Sita also expresses her affectionate feelings for Guha in Sundara Kanda.[175] In Tulasi, as well as other Ramayanas, he is only a friend and never reaches the status of a brother to Rama. Kambar seems to have got this spirit of brotherhood from the Tamil Vaishnava Saint Tirumangai Alwar.

(g) In Kambar, the three go into the forest in the order of Lakshmana, Sita and then Rama whereas in Tulasi the order is Rama, Sita and then Lakshmana and consequently Sita has to be careful in avoiding the foot-steps of Rama, and Lakshmana those of the other two.

(h) In Kambar, Lakshmana improvises a boat in Jamuna and it is he who builds the hut at Chitrakoota. In Tulasi, Lakshmana does not even build the hut. The gods do this as 'Kols and Kirats'. In Adhyatma Ramayana the disciples of Valmiki erect the huts.

(i) In Kambar, the three do not meet Valmiki on their way to Chitrakoota, whereas there is a long discussion between Rama and Valmiki in Tulasi Ramayan as is also found in both the source works.

(j) In Kambar, Bharadwaja advises Rama to stay at Chitrakoota as in Valmiki Ramayana. In Tulasi and Adhyatma, Valmiki himself suggests the place.

(k) In Kambar, Tulasi and Adhyatma Ramayanas Guha accompanies Rama in the boat while crossing the Ganges but in Valmiki Ramayana Guha stays away.

(l) In no other Ramayana except Tulasi, Rama meets the ascetic.

175. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (5-3-23).

16. *Bharata's Arrival at Ayodhya and Departure to Meet Rama:*

Kambar: After preserving the king's body in oil, Vasishtha sends word to Bharata in Kekaya Nad. Bharata starts immediately with Shatrughna.[176] On arrival they find Ayodhya enveloped in gloom. Shatrughna says that something very serious ought to have evidently happened which might not be set right till the day of delusion.[177] Bharata goes straight to the place of the king, and to his utter dismay he is not found. His mother Kaikeyi informs him first about the 'departure of his father to the heavens to be worshipped by god', and asks him not to feel sorry for it.[178] Bharata gets wild at her, sinks in sorrow and wants to meet Rama. Now Kaikeyi informs him of Rama's exile creating a sense of fear in him. He asks for the immediate cause and the time of his departure to the forest. Kaikeyi relates the story of her getting the benefits of the boons for him. Bharata's hands instinctively closes his ears and blood comes out of his eyes.[179] His anger knows no bounds. He goes to the extent of even attempting to murder Kaikeyi but desists only due to fear of Rama.[180] He accuses his mother and himself. Being unable to stand by her side, he goes to Kaushalya, falls at her feet and cries bitterly asking about father and brother. Even gods are melted to see his pitiable condition. He swears to his perfect ignorance and innocence. Kaushalya knowing the true position consoles him. Vasishtha takes Shatrughna to the place where the king's body is kept in oil. Unable to bear the suffering, he weeps bitterly. Then cremation takes place. Vasishtha tells Bharata the wish of Dasharatha that the son of Kaikeyi should not perform his cremation.[181] Shatrughna, therefore, performs the ceremonies. Here all the wives of Dasharatha other than the three queens fall into the same pyre and follow him to the heaven. Then Vasishtha asks Bharata to accept the throne. Bharata flatly refuses to do so. He is determined to bring Rama back. Shatrughna informs the people about the decision of Bharata.

176. *Ibid.*, (2-9-7).
177. *Ibid.*, (2-9-38).
178. *Ibid.*, (2-9-44).
179. *Ibid.*, (2-9-66).
180. *Ibid.*, (2-9-70).
181. *Ibid.*, (2-9-132) referring to (2-4-50).

This causes pleasant surprise in them. Bharata dressed in weeds,[182] starts with the army and the people of Ayodhya. Manthara also comes with Kaikeyi; seeing her, Shatrughna catches hold of her, but Bharata stops him from injuring her and takes him along with himself.[183] From the place where Rama stayed on the first night, Bharata walks to Shringaverpur as did Rama.[184]

Tulasi: After preserving the body of the king in an oil tank, Vasishtha sends word to Bharata who was having bad omen ever since the beginning of the unpleasant scene at Ayodhya. That night he has a very dreadful dream. Hearing the message of Guru Vasishtha, Bharata and Shatrughna start immediately and arrive at Ayodhya which appears to them to be in danger. Kaikeyi feels happy to hear of the arrival of Bharata and brings him to her place.[185] Bharata enquires of her about his father, all mothers, Sita and dear brothers Rama and Lakshmana.[186] Kaikeyi first informs him of the demise of the king which creates in Bharata fear and sorrow and he swoons. After regaining consciousness he enquires about the cause of his father's death and she relates the story in detail. Overwhelmed with grief at Rama's departure, Bharata forgets the death of his father. Kaikeyi consoles him and advises him to rule the country. He rebukes her and asks why she did not kill him as soon as he was born[187] and considers himself to be a most sinful person.

Shatrughna is infuriated hearing of the wickedness of Kaikeyi, but could not do anything. Seeing Manthara coming, "he plants a well-aimed flying kick on her hump and she falls downwards on the ground with a shriek. Her hump is shattered and her skull fractured, her teeth are broken and blood streamed from her mouth".[188] She murmurs: "Alas, my fate! what harm have I done? A cruel return for doing good!" Hearing this, Shatrughna drags her holding her tuft of hair but merciful Bharata releases her and both the brothers go to Kaushalya.

182. *Ibid.,* (2-10-52).
183. *Ibid.,* (2-10-54).
184. *Ibid.,* (2-10-59).
185. 'Ram Charit Manas' (2-160-2).
186. *Ibid.,* (2-160-4).
187. *Ibid.,* (2-162-4).
188. *Ibid.,* (2-164-2, 3).

Kaushalya runs away seeing Bharata, but falls on the ground unconscious.[189] Bharata is extremely pained and falls at her feet enquiring about his father, Sita, Rama and Lakshmana. He abuses his own mother and curses himself.

Hearing the sweet words of Bharata, Kaushalya gets up, embraces him shedding tears,[190] and consoles him stating that destiny cannot be altered. She relates how Rama, Sita and Lakshmana left for the forest, and that she could neither die nor accompany them. Bharata swears that he had absolutely no hand in the affair. At that time Vasishtha comes and asks him to perform the cremation of his father. All mothers start to fall in the same pyre and burn themselves, but Bharata stops them from doing so holding their feet. They abstain from doing so on the request of Bharata and also actuated by their desire to see Rama again.[191] Then Bharata performs the obsequies,[192] and on an auspicious day Vasishtha advises Bharata to occupy the throne just as Parashurama carried out the wishes of his father.[193] Kaushalya also asks him to act up to the advice of the guru.[194] But Bharata determines to bring Rama back. The people praise him and decide to accompany him. Bharata directs that the things required for coronation be also taken along with them.[195] They start the next morning. Bharata and Shatrughna travel on foot from Ayodhya itself,[196] and seeing this, all come down from their carriages, horses, elephants etc., but on the suggestion of Kaushalya, Bharata and Shatrughna get into a chariot[197] and go to the Tamasa River, stay for the night, resume their journey, stay at the Gomati the next night and reach Shringaverpur.

This is a very touching scene in the story of Ramayana and while keeping the plot the same, each has given a colour in his own exquisite manner. In Valmiki Ramayana, Bharata has very bad dreams when Vasishtha's messenger calls on him. When Bharata and Shatrughna enter Ayodhya, they find the city presenting a gloomy

189. *Ibid.*, (2-165-1).
190. *Ibid.*, (2-165).
191. *Ibid.*, (2-171-1).
192. *Ibid.*, (2-171-3).
193. *Ibid.*, (2-175-4).
194. *Ibid.*, (2-177-1).
195. *Ibid.*, (2-188-2).
196. *Ibid.*, (2-189-1).
197. *Ibid.*, (2-189-4).

appearance. They go straight to the king's palace and not finding him there, they ask Kaikeyi. She relates all that had happened, asks Bharata to be courageous and occupy the throne. He abuses her severely, and on the advice of Vasishtha, performs the cremation.[198] The queens perform their part of the ceremonies. On the thirteenth day of the obsequies, Bharata feels like giving himself unto fire or retire into the forest, but on the advice of Vasishtha, he gets calmed. Shatrughna tells him that Rama ought not to have left for the forest or at least the courageous Lakshmana ought to have stopped him, as the father was under the thumb of a lady following the path of injustice.[199] At this moment Manthara comes decorated. Bharata catches her, and handing her over to Shatrughna, asks him to do what he thinks proper for her. Shatrughna pushes her down and drags her, thereby breaking and shattering all her ornaments. Bharata asks him to excuse her, adding that should Rama not blame him, he would have certainly killed the sinful Kaikeyi.[200] He stresses that Rama should be brought back and he himself should take up his place in the forest for fourteen years. With the things necessary for coronation, all start for Chitrakoota, Bharata and Shatrughna travelling in a chariot with a very big army including one lakh of horses, nine thousand elephants, sixty thousand chariots etc.,[201] and reach Shringaverpur.

In Adhyatma Ramayana, the scene is brief. On a call from Vasishtha, Bharata and Shatrughna come to the sorrowing Ayodhya and go direct to Kaikeyi's palace. Bharata enquires of her about his father and is informed of his having gone to 'heaven where people go after the Ashwamedha Yagya.'[202] She relates the whole story which infuriates him. She tries to console him, but in return Bharata says that he would either enter into the fire or take poison or cut himself into two with a sword.[203] Bharata then goes to Kaushalya weeping and explains his innocence. On advice from Vasishtha Bharata performs the cremation.[204] When Vasishtha further advises him to ascend the throne, he expresses his firm decision to bring Rama back going with Shatrughna alone

198. 'Valmiki Ramayana' (2-76).
199. *Ibid.*, (2-78).
200. *Ibid.*, (2-78).
201. *Ibid.*, (2-83).
202. 'Adhyatma Ramayana' (2-7-65).
203. *Ibid.*, (2-7-80, 81).
204. *Ibid.*, (2-7-109).

on foot, adding that he would have killed Kaikeyi but for the fear of Rama.[205] He suggests that all go to the forest to persuade Rama leaving the sinful Kaikeyi alone at Ayodhya,[206] and that he live like Rama himself as an ascetic till his return. All go to Shringaverpur.[207]

The salient points of the scene are:

(a) In Valmiki, Adhyatma and Tulasi, Bharata has bad dreams and omens before messengers reach him. But in Kambar, no such signs are stated, perhaps with the idea of creating a surprise, apprehension and pain in him, and also to give a dramatic touch to the plot.

(b) In Kambar, Bharata straight away goes to the place of his father, and to Kaikeyi only when called for by her but in Tulasi, Bharata sees his mother first. Here Kambar follows Valmiki, and Tulasi Adhyatma Ramayana.

(c) Kambar's Bharata, as in Valmiki and Adhyatma Ramayanas, feels like murdering Kaikeyi but desists fearing Rama's wrath, whereas Tulasi's Bharata does not think of doing so.

(d) In Kambar, it is Shatrughna who performs the obsequies of Dasharatha, but in Tulasi, as in Valmiki and Ahyatma Ramayanas Bharata does it.

(e) In Kambar, all the wives of Dasharatha except the three queens die in the fire, whereas in the other three no such mention is made. In Tulasi the three queens want to join Dasharatha, but Bharata stops them.

(f) In Kambar, Bharata stops Shatrughna from taking action against Manthara, whereas in all the other three, Shatrughna thrashes her well. In Valmiki, it is Bharata himself who asks Shatrughna to punish her suitably.

(g) In Kambar, as in Valmiki and Adhyatma Ramayanas, Bharata goes in a chariot upto the place where Rama stayed for the first night but in Tulasi, Bharata and Shatrughna start on foot from Ayodhya itself and get into the chariot only when Kaushalya presses them to do so.

205. *Ibid.*, (2-8-7, 8).
206. *Ibid.*, (2-8-7).
207. *Ibid.*, (2-8-14).

(h) In the three works except Kambar, the things necessary for coronation are taken but in Kambar, Bharata does not take them.

17. *Guha and Bharata:*

Kambar: Guha gets ready with all his forces to attack Bharata and his huge army. Sumantra sees Guha standing on the banks of the Ganges, and tells him the real position. Bharata goes to meet him.[208] Guha is stunned to see the Bharata's condition and comes alone to him in a boat.[209] "On landing he falls at the feet of Bharata who does him a similar honour and embraces him even more tenderly than if he had been his father".[210] As to the cause of his arrival Bharata says:

"My father who had ruled the worlds without
A single flaw has set at nought once
The traditions of our ancient line: I come
To call our Rama and set them right."[211]

Guha's heart is moved, and he falls at his feet saying:

"Thou hast renounced as sinful, sire, the throne,
Thy mother did demand and thy father gave,
Although thyself art free from blame. And thou
Art come to seek thy brother with anguished heart.
When I behold this self-conquest, I ask
Can even a thousand Ramas equal thee?
How can a hunter ignorant like me
Thy praises fitly sing? E'en as the sun
Outshining does devour all other lights,
Thou hast transcended and eclipsed the fame
Of the sovereigns of thy ancient line!"[212]

Guha shows to Bharata the places where Rama slept and passed the night. Bharata 'falls down on the ground shaking all over with intensity of his grief and soaking the very earth with his tears.'[213] Guha tells:

"Thy Lakshman with his bow
In hand and with many a sigh and tear did stand,
On guard outside the whole night through, without
A wink of sleep."[214]

208. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (2-11-27).
209. *Ibid.*, (2-11-31).
210. *Ibid.*, (2-11-32).
211. *Ibid.*, (2-11-33).
212. *Ibid.*, (2-11-35, 36).
213. 'Kamba Ramayanam—A Study'—V. V. S. Aiyar, p. 300.
214. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (2-11-42).

Bharata laments:

"Of all the brothers born with Rama, I've been
For him the curse of endless miseries."[215]

Bharata spends the night in the same place as Rama. All cross the river next morning and the elephants swim through and the sages fly across the air with the power of their penance.[216] At the end Bharata and Shatrughna along with their mothers get into a boat with Sumantra and the boat starts. On Guha's enquiry Bharata introduces him at first to Kaushalya, then to Sumitra and lastly to Kaikeyi. Guha bows to all the three. The boat reaches the other bank. From here Bharata and Shatrughna walk with others and go to Bharadwaja.

Tulasi: Without understanding the true cause of the arrival of Bharata, Guha gets ready with all his forces to fight him. Seeing good omens, however, he feels that Bharata might take back Rama. So he goes with roots, fruits, birds, deers, fish etc.,[217] and finds Vasishtha coming. He falls at his feet introducing himself. Bharata hearing of him from the sage, comes down from the chariot and Guha bows to him putting the head on the ground[218] and Bharata and Shatrughna embrace him. Then Guha pays his respects to the queens who look at him as Lakshmana[219] and bless him. Then Bharata with tears asks Guha to show him the place, where Rama, Sita and Lakshmana slept.[220] Guha shows the ground, and Bharata prostrates to the place of the *Sisam* tree under which Rama slept. Then he finds two or three golden spangles of Sita's dress and puts them on his head with reverence. Guha encourages him by saying that all is due to destiny. Bharata on the request of Guha, 'goes to his tent with his thoughts on Raghuvir.'[221] All the people also come and pay reverence to the place where Rama slept, and spend the whole night in talking about Rama, Sita and Lakshmana blaming the fate. Next morning all proceed further, and Bharata and Shatrughna from here onwards proceed on foot[222] as Rama did. They reach Prayag. Bharata

215. *Ibid.,* (2-11-43).
216. *Ibid.,* (2-11-61).
217. 'Ram Charit Manas' (2-194-1, 2).
218. *Ibid.,* (2-194-4).
219. *Ibid.,* (2-197-3).
220. *Ibid.,* (2-199-4).
221. *Ibid.,* (2-203-1).
222. *Ibid.,* (2-204-2).

prays to the Triveni to grant him perfect devotion towards the feet of Rama and Sita in successive lives, and there comes a voice from the river:

> "Dear Bharat, you are altogether good, and your devotion to the feet of Rama is unfathomable; you have no reason to be downcast, for no one is as dear to Rama as you are."[223]

Bharata is pleased. All go to the sage Bharadwaja.

About this scene, Valmiki states that Guha gets ready to face Bharata with his big army, but later goes with fish and honey to him. Finding his true object, Guha calms down and offers all his belongings to him. Thereafter seeing the place where Rama and Sita slept and showing that to the mothers and others, Bharata and Shatrughna remain in that very place. Guha praises Lakshmana's sacrifice. Bharata finds a few gold laces there and his heart melts with sorrow. Next morning all cross the river in five hundred boats with horses, carriages, bullocks, mules etc., and the elephants cross swimming. They reach Prayag, wherefrom Bharata with selected people and courtiers goes to the sage Bharadwaja.[224]

In Adhyatma Ramayana too the scene is short and simple. Here Guha comes direct to Bharata and bows correctly understanding him from his very form. Bharata embraces him as a friend. When the place of Rama's rest is shown, Bharata finds a few gold spangles and sheds tears. All the people cross the river in five hundred boats with Bharata, Shatrughna, Kaushalya and Vasishtha in a special boat and in another one Kaikeyi and other ladies.[225] They arrive at the hermitage of Bharadwaja, which Bharata and Shatrughna alone visit.

This scene though practically similar in all the four works, has certain minor salient features as stated below:

(a) In Kambar, Bharata also falls at the feet of Guha as if he were his own father. This is not so stated in the other three works.

(b) In Kambar, as in Valmiki, the great sacrifice of Lakshmana is stressed, but in Tulasi as in Adhyatma Ramayana, this aspect of the character of Lakshmana is not stressed here.

223. *Ibid.*, (2-206-4).
224. 'Valmiki Ramayana' (2-84 to 89).
225. 'Adhyatma Ramayana' (2-8-40).

(c) In Kambar, as in Valmiki, Bharata spends the night in the same place where Rama slept, but in Tulasi, Bharata goes to his tent to spend the night and even this is not mentioned in the Adhyatma Ramayana.

(d) In the boat, Guha enquires about the mothers and Bharata introduces each individually in Kambar. This is not described in the three other works.

(e) In Tulasi, Bharata and others have a bath in Triveni when he prays to her for devotion at the feet of Rama-Sita. Then comes a voice from the river consoling Bharata. This is not stated in the other three works.

18. *Bharata reaches Rama's Abode*:

Kambar: Bharadwaja asks Bharata the reason for his coming in the hermit's dress without accepting the throne. On hearing the answer from Bharata, the sage is immensely pleased and gets from heaven a sumptuous dinner for all the people but Bharata takes only roots and vegetables.[226]

All go further through a desert which cools on account of their arrival. They reach Chitrakoota. Lakshmana sees from the top of a hill a big ocean-like-army coming. Presuming that Bharata himself is coming to attack them, he gets angry, comes to Rama and says that he would himself smash the whole army with Bharata in a second, thereby bringing forth a big ocean of blood which would join all the seven oceans of the earth.[227] But Rama pacifies him down saying that Bharata is coming to offer the kingdom back to him. Meanwhile Bharata and Shatrughna arrive and Rama sarcastically tells Lakshmana 'to behold the panoply of war in which the angry Bharata advances' to attack them.[228] Lakshmana's attitude changes with repentance. Bharata falls at the feet of Rama saying:

> "Thou hast forgotten Dharma and foresaken Truth
> Thou hast broken all our traditions."[229]

Tulasi: Bharadwaja says:

"Bharat! I know every thing. All is due to fate. It is not even the mistake of Kaikeyi, but was only due to the

226. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (2-12-17).
227. *Ibid.*, (2-12-30 to 41).
228. *Ibid.*, (2-12-50).
229. *Ibid.*, (2-12-53).

> influence of Saraswati which twisted her mind.[230] You could have accepted the throne, but what you now do is the proper thing."

Bharata is happy to hear it. He feels sorry not so much for the death of his father as for the exile of Rama who roams about from forest to forest without even foot-wear in the form of a hermit.[231] Then with the power of his penance, Bharadwaja offers comforts to all who had come with Bharata.[232] Next day Bharata starts to the place of Rama, hand in hand with Guha with no foot wear or umbrella.[233] But the clouds move on giving shade and gods spreading flowers. Now Indra, the king of gods, is perturbed and asks Brihaspati to make the meeting of Rama and Bharata impossible,[234] lest what all has been done might prove unsuccessful. Brihaspati expresses his inability, and asks Indra to leave his crooked mentality and extend devotion towards the feet of Bharata. Next morning, all cross Jamuna with good omens and approach Chitrakoota. There Sita dreams of Bharata's arrival with the people of Ayodhya.[235] Rama reads bad consequences in it and explains the same to Lakshmana.[236] Forest dwellers inform them of the coming of Bharata with a huge army. Rama is puzzled thinking of the boons granted by the king and the good nature of Bharata. Lakshmana takes a different view and tells Rama with rage in definite terms that it is only to attack them and have a kingdom free of any fear,[237] adding that it is the nature of all those who are in power. He wants to teach a lesson to Bharata and make both the approaching brothers lie on the bed of war.[238] At that moment there comes a voice from the sky praising the chivalry of Lakshmana asking him not to plunge into action without deep thinking lest he should repent later.[239] Listening to this voice, Lakshmana feels ashamed and hangs his head

230. 'Ram Charit Manas' (2-207).
231. *Ibid.*, (2-212-4).
232. *Ibid.*, (2-215).
233. *Ibid.*, (2-217-2, 3).
234. *Ibid.*, (2-218-4).
235. *Ibid.*, (2-227-2).
236. *Ibid.*, (2-227-4).
237. *Ibid.*, (2-229-3).
238. *Ibid.*, (2-231-2).
239. *Ibid.*, (2-232-1, 2).

down. Rama tells him the exceptional qualities of Bharata as a brother unparalleled in the creation.[240]

Bharata, taking leave of mothers, Guru and Ministers, starts with Shatrughna and Guha to the place of Rama, with a doubt as to whether the three would remain there. Bharata feels that in any case, Rama's sandals are the sole support.[241] There are certain good omens, observing which Guha says that the trouble will come to an end but the ending will be in distress.[242] With extreme anxiety they find the foot-prints of Rama which they touch and put on their head and heart.[243] Guha also, full of affection, forgets the path, and the gods show them the way and shower flowers.[244] At last Bharata reaches the spot and finds Lakshmana standing before Rama and Sita, all in hermit's attire. Bharata, Shatrughna and Guha with no joy or sorrow, pain or pleasure, approach them and prostrate crying, "Save me, Save me."[245]

In Valmiki, Bharadwaja treats Bharata and his party to celestial comforts and luxuries. After getting the particulars of the abode of Rama from him, Bharata starts the next morning when the sage enquires individually about the queens and Bharata tells about them,[246] and then they leave for Chitrakoota. From here Bharata also goes in a very shining palanquin.[247] When they get at the abode of Rama, he asks Lakshmana to observe the cause of the dust at a distance 'after giving sacred, tasteful and fried meat to Sita'. Lakshmana climbs up a tree and with rage asks the fire to be extinguished and Sita to get into the hut, and gets ready for fight with Bharata stating that it is but proper to kill him and Kaikeyi for their cruel intention to attack them and usurp the Koshala kingdom for ever.[248] Rama tells him that Bharata might be coming to give back the kingdom after pleasing father, and not to doubt about the integrity of Bharata for any reason, adding that if he would ask Bharata to offer the kingdom to Lakshmana, he would readily do so. Lakshmana feels

240. *Ibid.*, (2-232-4).
241. *Ibid.*, (2-235-1).
242. *Ibid.*, (2-235).
243. *Ibid.*, (2-239-2).
244. *Ibid.*, (2-239-3).
245. *Ibid.*, (2-241-1).
246. 'Valmiki Ramayana' (2-92).
247. *Ibid.*, (2-92).
248. *Ibid.*, (2-93).

ashamed, and says that father himself might be coming to take them back.[249] Bharata runs up to Rama crying and falls down at a little distance with brimming emotion. Shatrughna, Guha and Sumantra prostrate on the ground before Rama. Rama lifts them up and embraces the brothers with tearful eyes.[250]

In Adhyatma Ramayana, Kamadhenu comes down at the call of Bharadwaja; all are fed and kept in comfort. They go to the abode of Rama. The two brothers with Guha and Sumantra go ahead. Bharata and Shatrughna finding the foot prints of Rama, roll on that dust and run to the place of Rama. They find out his place, run with pleasure and sorrow and clasp the feet of Rama who embraces them with wet eyes again and again.[251]

In this scene, which is practically identical in all the four works, there are minor differences:

(a) It is only in Kambaramayanam that Bharata falls at the feet of Rama accusing him of having left Ayodhya on an improper issue saying:

> "Thou has't forgotten Dharma and forsaken Truth
> Thou has't broken all our tradition".

This attitude of Bharata is not portrayed in any of the other three epics.

(b) It is only in Tulasi that Bharadwaja tells Bharata that he should have accepted the throne as a rightful consequence to what all had happened, stating that his mother was not to be blamed as goddess Saraswati had changed her mind. However the sage tells that what Bharata had done was quite proper.

(c) It is only in Tulasi that God Indra gets puzzled at the determination of Bharata and Brihaspati gives him necessary advice.

(d) It is only in Tulasi that Sita gets a dream about the arrival of Bharata, and tells Lakshmana who reads something evil in it. The voice from heaven praising Lakshmana and asking him not to take any abrupt action, is referred to only in Tulasi. Similarly the good omens to Bharata and Guha's explanation of the same are found only in Tulasi. Later in Tulasi alone Guha forgets the path and gods show it.

249. *Ibid.*, (2-94).
250. *Ibid.*, (2-99).
251. 'Adhyatma Ramayana' (2-9-7).

(e) It is only in Valmiki that Bharadwaja enquires about the three queens and Bharata tells him about them individually. In Kambar, it is only Guha who enquires about them while on the boat and Bharata tells him about each.

(f) It is only in Valmiki Ramayana that Bharata goes in a shining palanquin towards Chitrakoota after meeting Bharadwaja, whereas in the other three he goes on foot (and in Tulasi even without sandals).

(g) It is only Valmiki who depicts Rama and Sita as non-vegetarians. Rama gives to Sita a sacred, tasteful and fried meat before Lakshmana climbs the tree to see the approaching army.

(h) In Valmiki alone, Lakshmana thinks that it may be Dhasaratha himself who comes to take them back to Ayodhya and offer the kingdom again to Rama.

19. *Bharata and Rama—The Sandals:*

Kambar: Both embrace each other shedding tears. Rama is astonished at the garb of Bharata and asks him about the welfare of their father and is shocked at the news of his death and falls down unconscious. After getting up, he sees Vashishtha, Bharadwaja and others around him. On the advice of Vashishtha, Rama performs funeral obsequies in the Ganges for his dead father. Sita is informed by Rama and with great sorrow, she also performs the necessary ceremonies with the help of the wives of the sages. The mothers come to Rama shedding tears at their widowhood. Then the army arrives. Bharata prays that Rama should return to Ayodhya and rule the kingdom but Rama declines as the kingdom rightfully belongs to Bharata. If so, says Bharata, he offers him the same.[252] Rama feels bound by the terms of the boons. Vashishtha supports Bharata. Rama however sticks to his decision. A voice of the gods from the heaven asks Bharata to go back and Rama to carry out the behest of his father.[253] Rama advises Bharata to follow the voice of the gods and Bharata takes a pledge before Rama that he would commit suicide by entering into fire should he fail to return immediately after the period of fourteen years to accept the throne.[254] Rama accepts this condition. Then Bharata asks for his

252. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (2-12-112).
253. *Ibid.*, (2-12-131).
254. *Ibid.*, (2-12-133).

sandals to represent him. Rama gives them to him.[255] Bharata prostrates before him and leaves with the sandals on his head. All the others who had come follow him. Bharata goes to Nandigram and places the sandals on the throne and carries on the administration taking orders from the sandals, with tearful eyes day in and day out and leads the life of a hermit.[256]

Rama, Sita and Lakshmana go southwards.

Tulasi: When Bharata prostrates towards Rama, Lakshmana recognises him to be Bharata from his sound and informs Rama that Bharata is prostrating before him. Rama forgetting himself rushes and embraces him. This embrace creates a fear in the hearts of the gods.[257] Lakshmana and Shatrughna also embrace each other. Then Lakshmana embraces Guha. Sita blesses all. Hearing from Guha about the arrival of the mothers, Vashishtha and others, Rama goes and bows before Vashishtha who embraces him. Then Rama meets all the people in a second. Seeing his mothers, Rama bows to Kaikeyi first,[258] stating that everything rests with destiny. Then he meets Sumitra and lastly Kaushalya.[259] Then all go to the ashrama. Sita meets all mothers-in-law. Vashishtha informs them about the king's demise. Rama, Lakshmana and Sita are immersed in deep sorrow. All go to the Ganges and perform the necessary ceremonies. Two days later, Rama requests Vashishtha to return with all others to Ayodhya[260] to which his answer is that all are happy with him. Sita serves all the mothers-in-law devotedly, assuming multiple forms, the secret of which is known to none else but Rama.[261] Kaikeyi seeing the two innocent brothers with Sita, repents and feels that death alone will be her reward.[262] Vashishtha asks all the people to find out some way to take back Rama to Ayodhya. He himself suggests that Bharata and Shatrughna accept the forest life, and Rama, Lakshmana and Sita return.[263] Bharata accepts the suggestion and is prepared to accept life-long forest dwelling.[264]

255. *Ibid.*, (2-12-135).
256. *Ibid.*, (2-12-140).
257. 'Ram Charit Manas' (2-242-4).
258. *Ibid.*, (2-245-4).
259. *Ibid.*, (2-246-2).
260. *Ibid.*, (2-249-2).
261. *Ibid.*, (2-253-1, 2).
262. *Ibid.*, (2-253-3).
263. *Ibid.*, (2-257-2).
264. *Ibid.*, (2-257-4).

Bharata says that the king has kept up his affection by his own death, leaving the mothers and all in distress, sending Rama, Lakshmana and Sita to the forest barefooted. Rama says that none is to be blamed, as all is the play of Destiny, as that

> "The king has stood by Truth by sacrificing me and deep affection by leaving his own body".[265]

Rama then asks Bharata for his decision. This makes Indra and the gods fear[266] and they pray to Rama. But speaking among themselves that everything is in the hands of Bharata, the gods began to meditate upon Bharata on the advice of their Guru Brihaspati that Bharata is the shadow of Rama. Understanding the anxiety of the gods, Rama is embarrassed.[267] After deep thinking Bharata with all humility tells Rama that all materials for the coronation have been brought and requests him to accept the same, allowing himself (Bharata) and Shatrughna to reside in the forest. Bharata requests Rama to send back at least Lakshmana and give him his place.[268] Or else, says Bharata, that all the three younger brothers may retire to the forest, Rama with Sita going back to Ayodhya.[269] Rama is silent. The messengers come and announce that Janaka is coming. The people of Ayodhya feel happy. Rama is embarrassed and Indra feels extremely anxious.[270] The wicked Kaikeyi is bitterly remorseful. All stay for a few more days awaiting Janaka's arrival. At Rama's instance, Vishwamitra[271] consults Janaka about the diet and they decide upon fruits and roots in the place of rice food. The forest dwellers bring abundant fruits etc., sufficient for the time being. They spend four more days, but the people are prepared to remain with Rama even for all the fourteen years as the period would pass off as a moment.[272]

Finding an opportune moment Sunayana, mother of Sita, with her people meets Kaushalya and her people.[273] Kaushalya and Sumitra blame the destiny. Kaushalya feels more for Bharata than

265. *Ibid.*, (2-265-3).
266. *Ibid.*, (2-266-1).
267 *Ibid.*, (2-267-3)
268. *Ibid.*, (2-269).
269 *Ibid.*, (2-270-1).
270. *Ibid.*, (2-273).
271. *Ibid.*, (2-279-2, 3).
272. *Ibid.*, (2-281-4).
273. *Ibid.*, (2-282-1, 2).

for Rama, Lakshmana and Sita.[274] She tells Sunayana to request her husband to get back Lakshmana and send Bharata instead with Rama, lest evil consequences should follow, for Bharata's attachment to Rama was immense.[275] Sunayana leaves with Sita to her place. Finding Sita in hermit's dress all feel sad. Janaka embraces her with excessive affection and blesses her. When night falls, Sita feels shy to say that her stay there will be improper. Knowing the feelings of Sita, queen Sunayana mentally praises her for her modesty within heart,[276] and tells the king. Repeatedly they embrace Sita and let her go gracefully. The queen tells Janaka about Bharata as requested by Kaushalya.[277] Janaka praises Bharata's sterling quality which cannot be complimented fully even by Rama[278] and approves of the proposal that Bharata may replace Lakshmana in the forest life.[279] Next morning Rama points out to Vashishtha that the stay of others had been a little too long. Vashishtha says that both the sets of people feel distressed without him.[280] Vashishtha informs Janaka of the words of Rama and asks for advice. All go to Bharata[281] who says that, in the presence of Vishwamitra, other ministers and the king himself who is an ocean of wisdom, he is but a negligible factor. The gods are frightened.[282] Indra advises the gods to play some stratagem lest all should be spoiled. They think of Saraswati, but she expresses her inability to do anything against Bharata.[283] Now the gods create 'wicked plots and evil stratagems with powerful enchantments of dread and error and sorrow and disheartenment'. Vashishtha tells Rama of the decision of Bharata and Janaka supported by himself.[284] Bharata with tearful eyes and clasping his lotus feet requests him to grant his only prayer. Rama seats him nearby. The evil hearted Indra spreads his divine illusion[285] and entraps all but Bharata, Janaka, the sages and the ministers. Rama realises this and says to Bharata

274. *Ibid.*, (2-283).
275. *Ibid.*, (2-285-1, 2).
276. *Ibid.*, (2-288-4).
277. *Ibid.*, (2-288).
278. *Ibid.*, (2-290-1).
279. *Ibid.*, (2-290-2).
280. *Ibid.*, (2-291-3, 4).
281. *Ibid.*, (2-293).
282. *Ibid.*, (2-295-4).
283. *Ibid.*, (2-296-1, 2, 3).
284. *Ibid.*, (2-297-2, 3).
285. *Ibid.*, (2-303-2).

that knowing the tradition of his race and the steadfastness of their father to truth and love they should keep it up, specially in the then evil period. He adds that Bharata should keep the people happy though it may be difficult for him during this long period of fourteen years, assuring him that all will be well at the end. Bharata simply bows before him saying that he is 'as happy as if he were to journey with him' and that he has 'reaped the reward of his birth into this world'. Then he asks for some 'support in the service of which he may endure to the end of the period of his exile'.[286] On the advice of Rama, Bharata goes to meet sage Atri. Bharata and Shatrughna keep the sacred waters brought for the coronation of Rama in a sacred deep well there as advised by the sage Atri. The well came to be called as 'Bharata Well'.[287] Then Bharata stays there for five more days. Finding Bharata and others not being in comfort without a support, Rama graciously offers a pair of Sandals as an insignia of his own person which Bharata keeps with reverence on his head.[288] Bharata feels happy with the 'support' and takes leave of Rama. The divine delution then disappears. This divine delusion was in a way beneficial, for, had it not been spread by Indra, all might have died of the acute feeling of separation.[289] Then all including Janaka, Vishwamitra, Vasudeva, Jabali, Guha etc., repart with the consent of Rama. Rama meets his mother-in-law and then Kaikeyi also and sees them off. Sita also meets all her people and her mothers-in-law. All return with a heavy heart in pangs of separation and reach Ayodhya on the fourth day. King Janaka stays for a couple of days[290] and sets right all matters of the kingdom and hands over the responsibilities to the ministers, Vashishtha and Bharata and then returns back to Mithila. Bharata on Vashishtha's advice puts the sandals on the throne.[291] He offers daily prayers and takes orders from them.[292] He lives in a hut in Nandigram in hermit's dress leading the life of a true ascetic. This brings us to the end of Ayodhya Kanda.

This is one of the important and enlightening places in the story of Ramayana which is practically similar in all Ramayanas

286. *Ibid.*, (2-308-4).
287. *Ibid.*, (2-311-4).
288. *Ibid.*, (2-317-2).
289. *Ibid.*, (2-318-1).
290. *Ibid.*, (2-323-3).
291. *Ibid.*, (2-324).
292. *Ibid.*, (2-326) See 'Dasharatha Jataka' in 'Jatakattavannana'.

including even 'Dasharatha Jataka' of 'Jatakatta Vannana'. This is the climax of sacrifice and is one of the best pictures in the world literature. There are some deviations of little importance. In Valmiki, Rama seeing Bharata in the hermit's dress asks him about their father, adding that it is wrong on his part to have come when father is alive.[293] However he expresses a doubt as to whether the king is dead. Bharata informs him about the death of their father. Rama performs the necessary obsequies. After Rama meets his mothers, Vashishtha and other people, Bharata says to Rama that he gives the kingdom back to Rama. This is not accepted by Rama.[294] Bharata's repeated prayer to Rama is of no avail. Jabali Brahmin, a materialist, appeals to Rama that he should accept the kingdom,[295] but Rama sticks to truthfullness. Jabali also approves of his stand. Now Vashishtha tries to convert Rama, and also Sumantra. Bharata joins in the request, but a few sages advise Bharata to carry out the words of Rama, and Rama also advises Bharata and all the people accordingly. Then Bharata requests Rama to put his feet on a pair of sandals decorated with gold, adding that they, as his representative, would protect the kingdom. Rama does so. Bharata returns with the sandals placing them on the head of an elephant, after saying to Rama that he will also live the life of an ascetic outside the city awaiting his arrival and will die in fire if he delays even by a day.[296] Rama accepts this condition. Bharata on the way, meets Bharadwaja Rishi and then reaches Ayodhya. He settles down in a cottage in Nandigram outside the city and conducts the affairs of the state taking orders from the sandals. Rama, Sita and Lakshmana leave Chitrakoota and go to Atri's Ashram. Atri's wife Anusuya feels happy at Sita's devotion to her husband and offers her celestial ornaments. They remain there that night.

In Adhyatma Ramayana, Rama enquires Bharata about their father, and Vashishtha tells him about his death.[297] After the obsequies, Bharata requests Rama to be crowned, he being the eldest. On Rama rejecting the request, he offers to take upon himself the forest life and instead requests Rama to return to Ayodhya. But again, seeing his suggestion falling flat, he re-

293. 'Valmiki Ramayana' (2-100).
294. *Ibid.*, (2-105).
295. *Ibid.*, (2-108).
296. *Ibid.*, (2-112).
297. 'Adhyatma Ramayana' (2-9-12, 13).

quests Rama to take him also to the forest life with Lakshmana, failing which he will commit suicide.[298] Then on an indication from Rama, Vashishtha takes him to a solitary place and tells him that Rama is the very God-incarnate for killing the demon Ravana, Sita is Lakshmi herself, and Lakshmana the incarnation of Seshnag, adding that the step taken by Kaikeyi was only due to the influence of the gods.[299] Now Bharata agrees, and requests Rama to give his sandals as his insignia for ruling the State. Rama puts his feet into the two celestial diamond studded sandals.[300] Bharata says that he will fall into fire and die, should he not return just on the day ending the period of exile. In a solitary place Kaikeyi says to Rama shedding tears to excuse her as he is 'Lord Vishnu Himself', the God, the unmanifested Absolute 'and the Eternal Being'. Rama approves this and declares her faultless.[301] Then all return to Ayodhya. Bharata dwells in Nandigram as an ascetic with the sandals on the throne. Rama with Sita and Lakshmana goes to the abode of Atri-Anusuya where she gives advise to Sita who receives from Anusuya two celestial ear-rings and two silk sarees.

On a comparative study, the following appear to be the notable salient points:

(a) In Kambar, Bharata agrees to return on the voice of the gods from the heavens which is supported by Rama, whereas in Tulasi it is by the force of the divine delusion spread by Indra. In Valmiki, however, a few sages change the attitude of Bharata followed by the advice of Rama. In Adhyatma Ramayana, Vashishtha tells Bharata about the incarnation and its object which makes Bharata yield.

(b) Bharata carries the sandals on his own head as per Kambar and Tulasi while according to Valmiki he takes them on the head of an elephant.

(c) In Kambar, Bharata takes a pledge that he will enter into fire if Rama fails to return at the due time. No such pledge is referred to in Tulasi, though Valmiki and Adhyatma Ramayanas speak of the pledge.

298. *Ibid.,* (2-9-39).
299. *Ibid..* (2-9-42, 46).
300. *Ibid.,* (2-9, 50).
301. *Ibid.,* (2-9-55 to 64).

(d) Kambar says that Bharata goes to Nandigram without entering Ayodhya, whereas the other three works state that Bharata first goes to Ayodhya, sets right matters and then goes to Nandigram. In Tulasi, the poet says that it was Janaka who sets right the affairs at Ayodhya, and only after he left Ayodhya, Bharata shifts to Nandigram.

(e) The meeting of Rama, Sita and Lakshmana with Atri-Anusuya is not described in this kanda by Kambar and Tulasi, whereas the two source works relate this at the end of Ayodhya Kanda itself. In Kambar, Aranya Kanda begins with this meeting[302] and in Tulasi it comes later in Aranya kanda itself.[303] However, Tulasidas makes Bharata meet Atri before returning to Ayodhya specially to dispose of the sacred waters brought for Rama's coronation.

(f) It is only in Tulasi that Lakshmana recognises Bharata from his voice and informs Rama.

(g) Only Tulasidas expatiates on the fear and anxiety of Indra and gods in the meeting of Bharata and Rama, apprehending that Rama may return to Ayodhya and the death of Ravana and the Rakshasas may not take place. In Tulasi, 'Divine Delusion' brings about the change in Bharata. Kambar, however, brings the 'voice of the gods from the heaven' asking Bharata to return allowing Rama to carry out the boon.

(h) Rama and Sita assuming multiple forms is spoken of only by Tulasidas. Sita's service to mothers-in-law is also mentioned only in Tulasi.

(i) The arrival of Janaka at Chitrakoota with Sunayana, his queen, and others from Mithila and his return after going to Ayodhya are stated only by Tulasidas and consequently Sita's meeting them and Sunayana's meeting Kaushalya are mentioned. None of the other three works narrates this. In Tulasi, Janaka ascertains the actions of Kaikeyi by sending men to Ayodhya.

(j) Kaushalya's suggestion for Bharata to accompany Rama, and Lakshmana to return is mentioned only in Tulasi. The poet says that it was due to her extraordinary love for Bharata and her knowledge of the extreme attachment of Bharata to Rama.

302. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (3-1-1).
303. 'Ram Charit Manas' (3-4-2).

(k) Vishwamitra's presence at Chitrakoota is mentioned only in Tulasi.

(1) The arrival of Jabali, a materialist Brahmin, during the discussion is stated only in Valmiki Ramayana.

(m) The lament of Kaikeyi in a solitary place clasping the feet of Rama and Rama's consolation to her are stated only in Adhyatma Ramayana, and Rama declares her faultless. In Tulasi, repentance of Kaikeyi and her feeling that death only could be her rescue are mentioned.

20. *Miscellaneous*:

(i) In Kamba Ramayanam when Bharata introduces Guha to Kaushalya as the good friend of Rama and an elder brother of Lakshmana, Shatrughna and himself,[304] Kaushalya consoles the sobbing Guha and Bharata, and addressing them as 'sons', says that they need not feel distressed specially because they have now got such a good and strong brother in Guha and that the five brothers unitedly should protect the big kingdom.[305] This is in agreement with the earlier statement of Rama, that Guha also is a brother, thus proving Rama to be a worthy son to a worthy mother. This aspect of Kaushalya's character is not developed in any of the other three works.

(ii) In Valmiki, Rama stresses on the return of Bharata by informing him about the promise of Dasharatha to the father of Kaikeyi at the time of his marriage with Kaikeyi that Koshala kingdom shall go to her son.[306] Kambar also, according to some scholars, brings this idea in two places, firstly when Rama agrees to abide by the orders of king Dasharatha for getting crowned[307] and secondly by Rama himself at Chitrakoota as a final argument for Bharata's ruling the kingdom.[308] This original promise of Dasharatha to crown the son of Kaikeyi is neither brought-in by Tulasidas nor referred to in his important source work 'Adhyatma Ramayana'.

304. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (2-11-66).
305. *Ibid.*, (2-11-67).
306. 'Valmiki Ramayana' (2-107).
307. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (2-1-72, 73).
308. *Ibid.*, (2-12-111).

III—ARANYA KANDA

1. *On the way from Chitrakoota to Panchavati*:

Kambar: Rama, Sita and Lakshmana come to Atri's abode, where Anusuya gives celestial ornaments and sane advice to Sita. Then comes the incident of giant Viradha who carries away Sita[1] and later leaving her, carries away both Rama and Lakshmana who climb on his shoulders and cut off his hands. Sita feels greatly worried. Rama finally kills the giant and buries him in a ditch when he is released from a curse. The giant gets back his original Gandharva form,[2] sings the great glory of Rama, relates his life-history and returns to his own celestial abode.

The three go to the ashrama of Sharabhanga. Indra[3] invites him to occupy the place of Brahma. Sharabhanga rejects the offer. Indra, seeing Rama, praises him and leaves the place. Sharabhanga and his wife, at the sight of Rama, get salvation and both go to the kingdom of Heaven[4] through fire.

The three reach Dandakaranya where the hermits represent to Rama the troubles caused by the Rakshasas, and Rama promises to get them rid of the troubles even if Lord Subramania or Vishnu or Shiva comes to the support[5] of the Rakshasas. At the request of the sages, the three stay there for ten years before leaving for the place of Agastya Muni.[6]

On the way they meet Sutheekshana who gives all his penance as offerings to Rama[7] and tells the way to the place of Agastya who is imparting teachings of Tamil which, having been given earlier by Lord Shiva Himself,[8] are greater than the four Vedas. Agastya gives Rama the Vishnu Bow and its never-failing quiver given to him by Varuna to whom it was entrusted by Rama himself on

1. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (3-1-20).
2. *Ibid.*, (3-1-46).
3. *Ibid.*. (3-2-2).
4. *Ibid.*, (3-2-42).
5. *Ibid.*, (3-3-22).
6. *Ibid.*, (3-3-26).
7. *Ibid.*, (3-3-31).
8. *Ibid.*, (3-3-41).

receipt from Parashurama.[9] Agastya suggests to them to camp at Panchavati and they on the way meet Jatayu, the king of vultures, who, on hearing of Dasharatha's death, falls unconscious.[10] Then he relates his story as the son of Aruna and younger brother of Sampati, and a great friend of Dasharata.[11] Then Jatayu proposes to enter into fire and die, but Rama stops it. Jatayu only postpones it till their return to Ayodhya.[12] Then he ascertains from them the cause of their exile and offers himself to be their guard during their stay there.[13] He shows the place of Panchavati on the banks of the river Godavari. The three live there in a cottage, Jatayu guarding them.[14]

Tulasi:

At Chitrakoota, one day Rama decorates Sita with beautiful flowers when Jayant, the son of Indra, comes in the form of a crow to test the strength of Rama. The foolish crow pecks Sita's foot and flies away.[15] Blood flows out. Rama shoots an arrow of reed at him. The crow runs off frightened and goes to his father in his original form, but Indra could not protect him. He goes to Brahma, Shiva and other gods with no better result. Narada advises him to go back to Rama himself for protection, and so does Jayant. Rama leaves him with loss of one of his eyes.

They then go to the Ashrama of Atri, where Anusuya gives Sita her celestial dresses and ornaments and advises her on the duties of a woman and the importance of chastity. They go further with Rama in front, Lakshmana at the rear with Sita in the middle, like 'illusion between the Absolute and the individual soul'.[16]

"On the way, the demon Viradha meets them and straight-away Rama slays him. He at once resumes a beautious form and Rama seeing him sorrowing sends him to his own abode.[17]

They come to Sharabhanga who is then contemplating going to the place of Brahma, but awaits Rama's arrival. He gives all his

9. *Ibid.*, (3-3-55).
10. *Ibid.*, (3-4-19).
11. *Ibid.*, (3-4-30).
12. *Ibld.*, (3-4-36).
13. *Ibid.*, (3-4-44).
14. *Ibid.*, (3-4-48).
15. 'Ram Charit Manas' (3-2-4).
16. *Ibid.*, (3-10-2).
17. *Ibid.*. (3-10-3, 4).

penance, wisdom, sacrifices, tapas and fasts as offerings to Rama, and goes to heaven after sitting on the fire of Yoga.[18]

They go ahead followed by the sages and hermits and find a heap of bones. The sages tell him that it is the bones of Rishis who were eaten away by demons wandering at night. Rama now swears, "I shall rid the earth of demons", and goes to the abodes of all sages and pleases them.[19]

Rama hides behind a tree and observes the profound devotion of Suteekshana—disciple of Agastya. Hearing about Rama's arrival Suteekshana dances in joy and sees Rama's light in his heart and falls down. Rama goes to him and manifests in his heart his divine form with four hands.[20] He awakes and clasps Rama's feet and sings his glory. Rama bids him ask for any boon, but Suteekshana leaves it to Rama who confers him eternal devotion, continence, divine wisdom and all other virtues. Then the sage asks:

> "I have received the boon my Lord has granted. Now grant me what I desire. O Rama, my Lord, bearing thy bow and arrows, dwell for ever unmoved in my heart with Janaki and thy brother like the moon in the sky."[21]

The same is granted. They go ahead towards the abode of Agastya, when Suteekshana also joins them. The two brothers fall at Agastya's feet and the sage embraces them. Rama requests the sage to impart to him the Mantra with which he may slay all persecutors of hermits. Agastya smiles at his request made as if he were an ordinary human being and requests Rama, Sita and Lakshmana to dwell in his own heart. Then the sage tells Rama about a beautiful spot in Panchavati for them to live and relieve the hermits from the troubles of the Rakshasas.

Rama reaches Panchavati. On the way he meets Jatayu and both show their mutual affection. A cottage is erected on the banks of the river Godavari for their residence.

In this scene, Rama, Sita and Lakshmana are brought to Panchavati. In Valmiki, the kanda begins with the entrance of Rama

18. *Ibid.*, (3-12-1).
19. *Ibid.*, (3-12).
20. *Ibid.*, (3-13-9).
21. *Ibid.*, (3-14).

into Dandakaranya. Then comes the incident of Viradha as in Kambar. Then Rama comes to Sharabhanga and finds Indra come to take the sage to the Brahma's abode. Sharabhanga stays to receive Rama and after telling him to meet Suteekshana, enters into fire and goes to Brahma Loka. Rama meets many sages and promises them to kill the demons and relieve them of all their troubles. Then they go to the hermitage of Suteekshana. They, at first, meet the hermit 'Dharma-Bhrit' who relates the story of the Panchapsar tank which was brought by the sage Mandkarni. Then they move from place to place for about ten years whereafter they reach the place of Suteekshana and enquire about the place of sage Agastya. On knowing the way, they go ahead, when Rama relates the story of Vatapi and his brother Ilval, and, after meeting the younger brother of Agastya, come to Agastya. Agastya hands over the celestial bow of Vishnu, the divine arrow of Bhahma, a never-exhausting quiver of Indra containing sharp fire-shafts and also a beautiful sword. Then, on the advice of Agastya, they go towards Panchavati. On the way they meet Jatayu, son of Aruna, and hear his genealogy right from Brahma, and his elder brother Sampati. Jatayu offers his services for guarding them and Sita in their absence. Selecting a place at Panchavati, Lakshmana builds a beautiful hut. They live there.

In Adhyatma Ramayana, Rama leaves for Dandakaranya after meeting Atri. They go with Sita in the middle, like Maya between God and Soul.[22] Then comes the incident of Viradha who is released from the curse of Durvasa.[23] Thereafter they meet Sharabhanga who gives all his penance to Rama and goes to the abode of Brahma. In Dandakaranya, Rama sees many skulls and bones, learns them to be those of sages and swears that he will kill all demons and relieve the hermits of their troubles. He lives there for a few years. Then he goes to the abode of Suteekshana, the disciple of Agastya, who directs him to his teacher. Rama on the way meets Agastya's younger brother Agnijihva. He meets Agastya and receives from him the bow of Vishnu, two celestial quivers and a diamond studded sword. Then Rama with Sita and Lakshmana goes to Panchavati meeting Jatayu on the way and resides there in the cottage erected by Lakshmana.

23. *Ibid.*, (3-1-38).
22. 'Adhyatma *Ramayana*' (3-1-13).

On comparison, we find the trend of the story to be the same in all the four, but the descriptions differ. The following points are noteworthy:

(a) The incident of Jayanta, son of Indra, is related only by Tulasidas. The other three have not mentioned it here but all the four have referred to it as coming from Sita when she hands over 'Choodamani' to Hanuman.[24]

(b) Presence of Indra is stated by Kambar as in Valmiki, when Rama and Sharabhanga meet, but Tulasi as in Adhyatma Ramayana does not refer to it.

(c) Kambar alone states that Agastya was imparting Tamil teachings.

(d) There is only a very short reference about Viradha in Tulasi, whereas in Kambar, Valmiki and Adhyatma Ramayanas there is a detailed account.

(e) The story of Vatapi is found only in Valmiki and not in the other three epics.

2. *Wiles of Shoorpanakha:*

Kambar: Shoorpanakha is born as Ravana's sister, an incurable disease resulting in his death. She was so gigantic and powerful that she could bring death to gods, sages and all beings on earth. She sees Rama and is attracted by 'his general handsomeness, by the beauty of his hands, shoulders, chest, complexion, blissful form of a hermit, feet, shining of the body, lips, waist, tufts of hair, the whole person and its good features', and forgets herself moved by passion for him. She desires to marry him and assumes an enchanting form more beautiful than a full moon. With lustful intentions and poisonous mind:

"The daughter of duplicity approaches full of sweet speech, her feet shapely and soft as the fresh red lotus and leaf-buds, her appearance recalling to mind the tender creeper and the Swan and the young peacock.[25]

"The Goddess of the golden lotus herself would yield to her beauty; her face gleams with the light of her lance-link eyes; and she is like lightning descending from the skies.

24. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (5-6-77); 'Ram Charit Manas' (5-27-3); 'Valmiki Ramayana' (5-38); 'Adhyatma Ramayana' (5-3-54).
25. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (3-5-31).

"Her form has the grace of the Kalpaka creeper; her words breathe tenderness and love; she walks on like a gay peacock, but her eyes she takes from the young fawn.

"Her anklets and her belt-bells, her gold garlands and the bees buzzling about the flowers in her hair announced that a fair one was approaching and Rama turns his eyes in that direction.

"She comes like softest ambrosia which the Devas are delighted to offer and with her waist a little bent under the weight of her superb bust, and He who in His mercy opens the eyes of wisdom to His devotees now sees her before his eyes.

"He sees the melting form, the like of which is not to be found in Swarga or the earth or the world beneath, and thinks within himself, 'who can confine the Spirit of Beauty? Where is the limit to beauty of shape?'

"And she that is full of desire puts into her expression all the charm she can command, joins her hands together in salute, lightly brandishes the lances of her fascinating eyes, and softly steps aside like a young fawn."[26]

She introduces herself as the daughter of the grandson of Brahma, sister of Kubera and of Ravana, the conquerer of Kailasa, a maiden by name 'Kamavalli'. If so, asks Rama, what is the reason of her being so beautiful though being a demoness, to which she replies that her being so charming is due to her good nature, good company, wisdom, righteousness, penance and the grace of God. Then Rama asks for the reason of her coming alone though she is a sister of a great king. She replies that it is only because of her desire for good qualities, company, not found in Ravana and his kingdom. Rama enquires of her the purpose of her visit, to which she replies:

"It's hard for fair ones nobly born to speak
The love that burns their hearts: alas for me,
My life doth ebe away and there is none
To help me here. What can I in this plight,
Save speak to thee in boldness all I feel?
I pray thee, save me from the cruel darts
That Manmath aims at me!"[27]

26. *Ibid.*, (3-5-32 to 37)—Compare (3-5-34) of 'Kamba Ramayanam' and (1-263-1) of 'Ram Charit Manas'.

27. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (3-5-45).

Now Rama finds that she is of a shameless nature with an evil mind. She continues without understanding the attitude of Rama:

> "I knew not until now that thou
> Wert here: and so my time and youth were lost
> In service done to hermits deemed wise."[28]

Now, quoting scriptures, Rama says that she belongs to the Brahmin stock and himself a Kshatriya, to which she says that her mother is a demon queen. When Rama retorts that men should not wed a Rakshasa maid, she repents for having introduced herself as a sister of Ravana. But immediately comes a ready reply that she has cast away her Rakshasa nature by austerities due to which gods have given her a charming form. Rama now says that for wedding a princess of her status as sister of Kubera, proper decorum and form will be necessary but she insists on Gandharva form of marriage as they are bound by mutual love and is certain that her brothers will give their consent later, and also that she will make Rama the King of earth and heaven. Now comes Sita, and Shoorpanakha tells Rama about her:

> "This girl is a Rakshasi in human form. She has come to deceive you. Beware of her. This is not her real form. She is a Rakshasi that eats raw meat. Throw her out and have nothing to do with her."[29]

Rama mockingly praises her wisdom saying that she has found out the truth. Shoorpanakha asks Sita to go away from her Rama, and Sita now holds Rama with fear. With an aversion to any further talk with her, Rama asks her to quit the place, warning her that if his brother Lakshmana happens to see her, he will grow angry being short-tempered. Shoorpanaka persists:

> "When Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva and Manmatha are doing penance to get me, is it proper on your part to avoid me and like that deceiptful one with no quality or conduct?"[30]

Finding her not leaving the place, Rama with Sita goes into the cottage leaving her alone. She leaves the place with disappointment and pain. She has a hallucination of seeing Rama and requesting him to quench her thirst lest she should commit suicide. However she survives in great distress. Next morning she comes in the

28. *Ibid.*, (3-5-48).
29. *Ibid.*, (3-5-63)—Trn. C. Rajagopalachari.
30. *Ibid.*, (3-5-68).

absence of Rama and attempts to carry away Sita thinking that she is the hindrance in her away. Lakshmana from the dark shrubs nearby sees her fiercely approaching and asks her to go away, but she approaches Sita and tries to carry her away through the sky. Lakshmana skilfully pushes her down and cuts her nose, ears and breasts thinking that killing her—a woman—with his arrow will be a great sin.[31] Blood rushes out of her nose and its flow cuts the mud across. She shreaks so loud that even those in heaven hear it. Now Rama comes there and Shoorpanakha beating her stomach and shedding tears tells him of her lot for having loved him. Rama asks her who she is, and she says that she is the same person who came the previous day. Then Rama asks Lakshmana what she did. Lakshmana tells him what happened. Shoorpanakha argues that it is but natural for a woman to get angry with another trying to love her own lover.[32] Rama asks her to run away immediately. But Shoorpanakha still persists in loving him and says:

> "Should anybody go to my brother and tell him of this incident, he will immediately cut off his tongue thinking that it is impossible. Hence, if really he comes to know of this he will completely destroy your race. You have no scope for living. Better utilise your beauty and youthfulness.[33]
>
> "I shall see that you are saved. That lady is so slender as a creeper practically with no waist. Even now nothing is spoiled by your cutting my nose. I can get it back with greater beauty.[34]
>
> "Will you accept me if I get for myself a proper form of a bride? Do you think, I am so unwise as to misunderstand your action? I know fully well that you cut my nose only to keep me eternally here with you and to avoid other men looking at me.[35] To free yourself from the terrible anger of the Rakshasas please accept me."

Rama out of disgust asks her to bring all her forces to fight with him and see the consequence for herself. But still Shoorpanakha persists which incites Lakshmana to request Rama to allow him to kill her. Hearing this Shoorpanakha slips away vowing death to them.

31. *Ibid.*, (3-5-93-94).
32. *Ibid.*, (3-5-122).
33. *Ibid.*, (3-5-125).
34. *Ibid.*, (3-5-130).
35. *Ibid.*, (3-5-133).

Tulasi: One cruel hearted Shoorpanakha, sister of Ravana goes to Panchavati and gets agaitated and love-sick seeing the two princes. She assumes a charming form[36] and speaks sweet words smiling to Rama that there is no man like him and no woman like herself, and that the chance for their meeting has been thoughtfully planned by God. Continuing she says that she has been in search of a proper mate for herself but finding none till then has remained a virgin. Rama 'looking at Sita' says that his younger brother is still a bachelor. Shoorpanakha goes to Lakshmana who sends her back to Rama stating that he is only Rama's slave.[37] She follows the advice, but is again sent back to Lakshmana. Now Lakshmana says to her that only a shameless person will woo her. Getting deeply mortified, she goes back to Rama in her original dreadful form which terrifies Sita. Rama by a gesture suggests Lakshmana dealing with her suitability. With the greatest ease Lakshmana cuts off her nose and ears, thereby throwing a challenge to Ravana.[38] Her form becomes dreadful like a hillock with a stream of red ochre. She runs off to Khara and Dooshana.

This scene is the immediate fore-runner of the climax of the epic. Though the final action in the scene is the same in all the epics, there are differences in incidents and topics. In Valmiki, Rama and Shoorpanakha relate their biographies and genealogies followed by dialogue and incidents as in Tulasi but in a more detailed manner. In Adhyatma Ramayana the picture is more or less similar to Tulasi.

This is a very significant picture so far as deviation in picturisation is concerned. Kambar is totally different from the other three. The notable points are:

(a) Kambar brings Shoorpanakha in a very charming and enchanting form as against Valmiki who keeps her original form as a demoness. Tulasi is strikingly similar to Kambar in giving her a charming form when she first approaches Rama, while in Adhyatma Ramayana, her form at the time is not stated, though she is shown as one who can assume any form of her choice.

(b) In Kambar, the scene runs for two days, and Lakshmana is not referred to in the happenings of the first day. Rama is alone

36. 'Ram Charit Manas' (3-20-4).
37. *Ibid.*, (3-20-7).
38. *Ibid.*, (3-20).

when she first arrives. On the second day, Rama is out of the scene when Lakshmana maims her, and comes only later when she still approaches Rama in spite of the severe action. Lakshmana takes action by himself without any indication from Rama. In Valmiki, Adhyatma and Tulasi Ramayanas there is only one meeting.

(c) Kambar does not make Rama ask Shoorpanakha to approach Lakshmana as in the other three works.

(d) In Kambar, Lakshmana cuts off the nose, ears and the breasts of Shoorpanakha, whereas in the other three only nose and ears are cut.

(e) The imaginations and dialogues are described at great length in Kambar, whereas it is short in Tulasi as in Adhyatma Ramayana.

3. *Death of Khara—Dooshana:*

Kambar: Shoorpanakha falls at the feet of Khara crying over her lot, and states that it is due to her trying to carry away for Ravana a damsel who is with two human beings living in Panchavati. Khara seeing her deformed and hearing her lament, grows angry and sends his generals to fight Rama and Lakshmana. Shoorpanakha shows them the way and in the fight, the chiefs are killed. Shoorpanakha runs back to Khara who with six hundred thousand warriors in fourteen regiments with all their weapons headed by captains like Dooshana and Trishira, starts for a regular war with the two princes. Realising the huge army coming, Lakshmana sets out for action,[39] but Rama sends him to the cottage to guard Sita. Then Rama alone starts for the war. Shoorpanakha shows Rama to Khara who says that he will finish him in no time. Akampana finds certain bad omens and advises Khara not to wage war against Rama,[40] but Khara pays no heed to him. His forces surround Rama and attack him. But, in no time, all but the fourteen captains are immersed in the foul-smelling blood by the fierce shafts of Rama.[41] Then the fourteen get infuriated, and encircle Rama who severs their fourteen heads by fourteen arrows. Then comes Trishira with his army and has the end. Now follows Dooshana with his army encouraging the

39. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (3-6-69).
40. *Ibid.*, (3-6-73).
41. *Ibid.*, (3-6-103).

retreating forces. His head is also severed followed by the death of all his forces who all go to heaven in a few seconds.[42] Finally comes Khara with his army. In this fight, the bow of Rama suddenly breaks making a huge sound. Gods get frightened. But with no anxiety, Rama stretches his hand at his back and gets the Vishnu bow[43] which originally he had got from Parashurama and later Agastya, and had again given it to Lord Varuna.[44] Khara loses his chariot first, then the right hand followed by the left and finally he gets his neck cut.[45] Rama goes back to Sita, and Shoorpanakha cries over the corpse of Khara. Then she quickly reaches Lanka to pass on the information to her brother Ravana.

Tulasi: On seeing and hearing Shoorpanakha, Khara-Dooshana with all their forces move towards Rama with her in the front. Observing the approach of the demon-army from the dusty sky afar, Rama asks Lakshmana to go into a mountain cave with Sita and guard her carefully. He marches on to face the demon-army. Seeing that Rama is extremely handsome and 'an ornament among men', Khara-Dooshana say:

> "Though he has made our sister hideous to behold, yet should not so peerless a hero be put to death",

and ask their messengers to tell Rama to hand over his wife and leave for his home alive.[46] The messengers convey this to Rama. He asks them to tell Khara-Dooshana to go back if they are not strong, for Rama never attacks one who retreats.[47] Now hearing the answer, Khara and Dooshana get ready for war, but his men at the mere hearing of the twang of Rama's bow-string turn deaf and unconscious for a little while. Later they begin their severe fight. Rama sends numberless shafts and severs their hands and heads, and the whole army is cleared in a minute but they get up again and fight.

Now the gods get frightened seeing the demons to be fourteen thousand and Rama single. Rama understanding the fear of the gods, does a miracle:

42. *Ibid.*, (3-7-64).
43. *Ibid.*. (3-6-175, 176).
44. 'Kamba Ramayanam' Vol. III; Gopalakrishnamachariar, p. 369.
45. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (3-6-185).
46. 'Ram Charit Manas' (3-22-3).
47. *Ibid.*, (3-22-6).

"The enemies see each of their friends as Rama and joining battle with one-another they fight and die."[48]

"Crying Rama, Rama," says the poet, "they leave their bodies and thus win to the realm of bliss. By this means in a moment the gracious Lord slays his enemies."[49]

Then Lakshmana brings back Sita to Rama. Shoorpanakha goes to incite Ravana to action.

Shoorpanakha is the chief medium through whom the object of Rama's exile to the forest is achieved. Her first appearance is important. There are three places where Rama slays Rakshasas—Tatakavana, Panchavati and Lanka. The disfigurement of Shoorpanakha is an important stage in the story followed by Khara-Dooshana's death. In Valmiki, Shoorpanakha tells Khara to kill Rama and Lakshmana with Sita for their blood alone can quench her thirst.[50] Khara sends first his selected formidable fourteen who die at the hands of Rama. Shoorpanakha goes back to Khara and states that she will commit suicide should he not kill Rama, and falls down near him unconscious,[51] and weeps beating her abdomen. Now Khara is very much offended and feels insulted. He starts with Dooshana and fourteen thousand warriors and goes in great speed when many bad omens occur. Khara does not pay any heed to these. The war starts. Gods get terrified. At first Dooshana with his five thousand is killed by Rama. Then all die in the battle field leaving Khara, Trishira and Rama only. Thereafter follows the death of Trishira by the three shafts of Rama cutting his three heads. At the end Khara is killed. Gods are happy. Sita and Lakshmana come out of the cave and meet Rama.

In Adhyatma Ramayana, Shoorpanakha asks Khara to kill Rama and Lakshmana for her to drink their blood, threatening that she would otherwise commit suicide.[52] Khara starts forth with his army. Rama asking Lakshmana to go into a safe cave comes out ready for the fight. The annihilation of the complete

48. *Ibid.*, (3-24-Chand No. 4).
49. *Ibid.*, (3-24).
50. 'Valmiki Ramayana' (3-19).
51. *Ibid.*, (3-21).
52. 'Adhyatma Ramayana' (3-5-25).

army with Khara, Dooshana and Trishira occurs in no time.[53] Shoorpanakha runs to Ravana.

Now in this scene there are certain important differences:

(a) In Kambar, Shoorpanakha gives Khara a reason for her approaching Sita, viz., that she wanted to carry her away for her brother Ravana. This is not mentioned in any of the other three epics.

(b) In Kambar, Shoorpanakha, tells Khara all that happened but does not ask Khara to kill Rama or any one else as is done in Valmiki Ramayana and in Adhyatma Ramayana. In Tulasi also there is no request for killing of any of the three. Kambar avoids it purposely because, Shoorpanakha later requests Ravana to take Sita for himself giving her Rama.[54]

(c) Normally the number of fighters on the side of Khara is said to be fourteen thousand, but Kambar alone takes it to six hundred thousand. In Tulasi, however, a supernatural element has been introduced by bringing all the dead into life again and again.

(d) Akampana's reading the bad omens and his discussion about them with Khara are brought in only by Kambar. Others have stated that there were bad omens which were not taken seriously by Khara.

(e) In Kambar only, we are told about the breaking of Rama's bow, and his getting the bow of Vishnu. These find no mention in the other three works.

(f) In Tulasi alone, Khara thinks of not fighting with Rama looking at his handsome form and asks Rama to give him Sita and go home alive. The other three epics have not brought in this feeling of Khara.

(g) Tulasi alone introduces the miracle-element by which the enemies of Rama see Rama in each other and kill one another.[55]

53. *Ibid.*, (3-5-35).
54. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (3-7-79).
55. Kambar has brought in this type of a miracle in the war between the reserve forces with Rama—'Moola Bala-vadai Padalam' in Yuddha Kanda.

(h) Again, Tulasidas only makes the demons cry 'Rama, Rama' and go straight to heaven, stressing thereby the efficacy of repeating Rama's name.

(i) Kambar and Tulasi do not make Shoorpanakha say that she would commit suicide if Rama is not killed by Khara, whereas Valmiki and Adhyatma Ramayanas have said so.

(j) Only in Kambar, Lakshmana at first offers himself to fight.[56] Rama stops him asking him to guard Sita in the mountain cave.

4. *Shoorpanakha and Ravana:*

Kambar: With little feeling for the demise of Khara and other demons, and with undiminished love for Rama still at heart, Shoorpanakha runs to Ravana to inform him about the extraordinary charm of Sita, so that the only hindrance according to her, may be removed from her path of love to Rama.[57] She falls at the feet of Ravana and says that the sons of Dasharatha, Rama and Lakshmana by name, who are like Manmathas have disfigured her. Ravana feels ashamed and disgraced,[58] and asks her whether Khara and others did not kill them. Shoorpanakha informs him about their fight and death which creats extreme rage and grief in him. Ravana asks her to tell him of the fault that she committed. Shoorpanakha says:

> "My fault, it related to a woman whose waist is like the lightning, whose tender arms are like the bamboo stem, and whose colour is that of pure gold. I imagine she is Lakshmi herself who has left her lotus home and lives with Rama."[59]

Ravana asks her as to who she is. Shoorpanakha explains:

> "Her name is Sita: blessed is the earth
> That bears her tender feet upon her lap.
> Her bosom shines like cups of burnished gold:
> The music of her voice recalls the sounds
> Of woods, and groves and honey tender-sweet.

56. *Ibid.*, (3-6-60).
57. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (3-7-1).
58. *Ibid.*. (3-7-58, 60, 61).
59. *Ibid.*, (3-7-67).

Her tresses rich adorned with flowers, she is
A queen among the fair of heavens! If she
Who dwells i' the lotus is not worthy ev'n
To be her maid, how can I make thee feel
Her beauty?[60]

They're fools who say that Manmatha was burnt
By fire of Shiva's eyes. This is the truth:
He saw this damsel and smitten was with love
For her form; but being spurned by her,
He wasted sheer away and a martyr died
To love-such is the beauty of her form!........"[61]

Then she arouses passion in his heart for her by saying:

"If once her charms are thine, O Sire, thy heart
Can never rove again and all thy wealth
Thou'lt place at Sita's feet: and mark my words:
Thou'lt bless me for my pains when once thou look'st
On her; but all thy queens will vent their hate
On me—for verily I bring them nought
But ruin."[62]

Now Shoorpanakha comes out with her object and says:

"* * * * Possess her, immerse thy soul
In love, while all the world shall sing in joy
Thy marriage song: a guerdon now I claim:
Put forth thy valour and defeating Ram,
Wed me to him, for, him I love as life.[63]

* * * * * *

For, Sire, 'tis only now that thou art given
T' enjoy th' advantage of thy twenty eyes
And arms! 'Tis such a fair that I did try
To bring for thee, when Lakshman brother of Ram,
Attacked and wounded me. I hurried here
To tell thee this, and after telling all,
To go and end my life disgraced for ever!"[64]

Hearing the words of Shoorpanakha, Ravana's anger, valour and sense of shame desert his heart. He forgets Khara, Lakshmana and the disgrace that has befallen him but not the fair one of whom his sister spoke:[65]

60. *Ibid.*, (3-7-68, 69).
61. *Ibid.*, (3-7-71).
62. *Ibid.*, (3-7-77).
63. *Ibid.*, (3-7-79).
64. *Ibld.*, (3-7-80, 81).
65. *Ibid.*, (3-7-82, 83).

> "Even before he brings away the fair one whose form was like unto the peacock the Lord of Lanka imprisons her within the dungeons of his heart! And thereby his heart begins to slowly melt away even as butter when placed in the sun."[66]

The pangs of his passion grows more and more intense. He gets a burning sensation all over his body. The cool sea breeze only roasts his limbs. Now, he goes into a shady grove, a summer-house, lies on a bed of new-plucked flowers, but nothing cools his system, though it was mid winter. Now he cries:

> "I hate this season, change it."

At once winter disappears and spring takes its place. 'But what can cure those men who have drunk the poison of love?'. So, displeased with it, he calls for the autumn. That season too does not suit him. 'Let there be no seasons'! he commands, and then all the seasons disappear and Lanka shines like heaven itself where there are no seasons, but one uniform and entrancing flow of time. But even then the body of Ravana continues to burn.[67]

Now, Ravana orders the moon to appear, but he finds that also burning him, and consequently he asks his men why they have brought the sun, to which they reply that it is only the moon.[68] Hating the moon, he orders for the sun with the day time. When it is brought, Ravana says that it is the moon, but his men tell him that it is the sun itself. Disappointed, he calls for the crescent moon which only gets rebukes after arrival. He finally asks for complete darkness. It is then that he finds the form of Sita herself in hallucination, and calls for Shoorpanakha. She comes, and when asked by Ravana, says immersed in her own hallucination:

> "The figure that stands over there is that of Rama of the strong bow, with his lotus eyes and lips like red fruit, with his broad chest and strong arms and long beautiful flower garlands. Behold he stands like a blue hillock."[69]

Ravana immediately asks her for the cause of her seeing a different picture to which she replies that it is only due to his mis-

66. *Ibid.*, (3-7-85).
67. *Ibid.*, (3-7-99 to 104).
68. *Ibid.*, (3-7-105 to 112).
69. *Ibid.*, (3-7-149).

taken sight of hallucination. Now Ravana asks Shoorpanakha the cause of her seeing Rama's form. Shoorpanakha satisfied him by saying that ever since she was maimed, she could not forget him.[70] As a cure, she offers a suggestion 'which is the seed of all the subsequent action of the Ramayana'.[71]

"Thou art the undisputed master of the Universe. Why art thou then hesitating to act? Go to the place where she is and capture her for thyself."[72]

Shoorpanakha after injecting in him a desire for a line of action, leaves him to suffer a living death, and goes away.

Tulasi: Seeing the death of Khara-Dooshana and all his men, Soorpanakha goes to Ravana with rage and says to him, lamenting:

> "You have taken no thought for your land or treasure; day and night you drink and sleep and care not that the enemy is at your gate."[73]

Ravana asks for the reason for her condition. She says in short what happened, informing about the purpose of their visit to the forest. About Rama she only says:

> "He, by name Rama, is a lion-like man with strong arms wonderfully beautiful, fearless, and also majestic."

Of Sita she tells Ravana:

> "A girl of tender age whom the Creator has fashioned of perfect loveliness, a match for a thousand Ratis."[74]

Hearing from her all about the incidents at Panchavati, Ravana consoles her bragging and boasting of his own prowess and goes to his palace with great worry and sleeplessness. He begins thinking about the persons who can kill Khara-Dhooshana who are equal to him in strength, whether he could be God himself or only man. He decides to go and purchase war with him with the idea that he will get salvation should he be God Himself and kill him, or else he will carry off his bride winning the war should he be only a human and mere princeling.[75]

70. *Ibid.*, (3-7-152).
71. 'Kamba Ramayanam—A Study'—V. V. S. Aiyar, p. 241.
72. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (3-7-153).
73. 'Ram Charit Manas' (3-26-3, 4).
74. *Ibid.*, (3-26-2 to 6).
75. *Ibid.*, (3-29-2, 3).

The excuse for the abduction of Sita by Ravana having happened, this scene brings together the two persons Sita and Ravana who contribute for the epic to reach the climax. It is Shoorpanakha who, according to Kambar and Tulasi, brings the two parties together. But in Valmiki, we find Akampana first informing Ravana about the death of Khara-Dooshana etc. at the hands of Rama who had come to the forest with his brother Lakshmana and his wife Sita. Ravana is enraged and wants to fight and kill Rama and Lakshmana, but Akampana tells him that it is impossible for him even to see Rama, not to speak of the fight. Thus he suggests to him to carry away Sita, and that her absence itself will cause his death. Ravana immediately goes to Mareecha who dissuades him from his proposed action stating that the person who gave him the suggestion should necessarily be his enemy in the disguise of a friend. Ravana returns.[76]

Now comes the scene of the meeting of Shoorpanakha and Ravana. Seeing the tragic end of the fight at Panchavati, Shoorpanakha goes to Ravana who is then seated on the throne, and criticising him badly tells him what had happened including the death of Khara and his forces. She tells him of the characteristics of Rama and Lakshmana and the beauty of Sita, and adds that she is fit only to be his wife and himself a worthy husband to her. She wants him to compare his own strength with that of Rama and then only to take steps.[77] Ravana goes again to Mareecha.

In Adhyatma, Akampana does not figure here. Shoorpanakha goes to Ravana and criticises him for his luxurious life. She appraises him of the death of Khara and all his forces, and tells him about Rama, Lakshmana and Sita and that she was difigureed for the reason that she tried to carry away the charming Sita for him. She suggests that Sita is so beautiful that his life will be worth living if he gets her as his wife. Ravana consoles Shoorpanakha.

He thinks whether Rama is a man or God incarnate in response to the prayer of Brahma, and decides to wage war with him, for death at his hand may get him life in heaven, and success may eternally keep his demon kingdom.[78]

76. 'Valmiki Ramayana' (3-31).
77. *Ibid.*, (3-34).
78. 'Adhyatma Ramayana' (3-5-69).

On a comparative study we find the following noteworthy points—

(a) Only Valmiki mentions the report of Akampana and his suggestion to abduct Sita. The other three works omit this picture.

(b) Shoorpanakha goes to Ravana as a overbearing sister in Valmiki, Adhyatma and Tulasi Ramayanas, whereas in Kambar she is an aggrieved suppliant.[79]

(c) In Kambar, Shoorpanakha goes to Ravana with a heart full of love for Rama. Her object in going is more to get her passion fulfilled than for having Rama and Lakshmana punished, whereas in the other three, she goes to Ravana only to take vengeance against Rama and Lakshmana.

(d) In Valmiki and Kambar, Ravana decides to punish Rama and Lakshmana and abduct Sita for fulfilling his passion but in Adhyatma and Tulasi, Ravana imagines that the one who killed Khara and his forces may be the very God-incarnate and death at his hand will give him heaven.

(e) Only Kambar gives an extravagent description of the boundless passion of Ravana for Sita and also of Shoorpanakha for Rama and not any of the other three. As a justification for this, V. V. S. Iyer says:

> "For, what but such an intense and unreasoning passion could make Ravana cling to Sita to the last, in spite of his own terrible defeats, and the loss of Kumbhakarna, Atikaya, Indrajit and even his reserve force?"[80]

5. *Maya Sita:*

Kambar: He has not referred to the change of her original form into fire and assuming the form of 'Maya Sita'.

Tulasi: While relating the story of Ramayana to Uma, Shiva tells her that she should 'listen to the marvellous story of the scheme that Rama devised'. After the death of Khara and his forces Shoor-

79. 'Kamba Ramayanam—A Study'—V. V. S. Aiyar, p. 237.
80. *Ibid.*, p. 241.

panakha goes to Lanka. Lakshmana fetches fruits and roots. Now Rama tells Sita with a smile:

> "Hearken, beloved wife, faithful, beautiful and virtuous; I am about to play an engaging game as man; do you then make your abode in fire till I have extirpated the demons."[81]

As soon as Rama says so, Sita lays her lord's feet upon her heart and enters into the fire. The poet now says:

> "She left her image there of just the same form and modest disposition as her own. Not even Lakshmana knows the secret of what the Blessed Lord has done."[82]

Thus from this scene till the fire ordeal after the death of Ravana, it is not the true Sita who plays the role, but the 'Maya Sita'.

This change of form is not mentioned in Valmiki. In Adhyatma Ramayana, Rama tells Sita about the arrival of Ravana and asks her to remain invisible in the fire for a year leaving her shadow outside, and to come out only after the death of Ravana.[83] Sita does so. 'Maya Sita' is thus referred to only in Adhyatma and Tulasi Ramayanas.

6. *Mareecha and Ravana:*

Kambar: After consulting his ministers, Ravana flies in his plane to Mareecha and expresses his wish to get Sita for himself as a revenge to the disfigurement of Shoorpanakha and the killing of Khara and his forces by Rama and his brother, and requests for his help. Mareecha does not agree with Ravana. He recalls his past experience about the prowess of Rama at the time of his mother's death and advises him not to take such a step. Ravana grows angry and decries him for keeping quite even though his mother was killed by Rama.[84] But Mareecha persists in giving the same advice, thereby arousing the rage of Ravana. Mareecha pondering

81. 'Ram Charit Manas', (3-30-1)
82. *Ibid.*, (3-30-2, 3)
83. 'Adhyatma Ramayana', (3-7-2, 3)
84. 'Kamba Ramayanam', (3-7-197)

over the consequences and the end of Ravana, asks him as to what help he expects of him. Ravana asks him to get Sita by a foul play, adding that he would prefer death at the hands of Rama rather than be tormented by Cupid.[85] Mareecha tells him that it will be proper to get her after waging war with Rama, but this is not approved of by Ravana for the reason that Sita might commit suicide in case he kills Rama in fight.[86] Mareecha who believes in the inevitability of destiny, asks him how best he could help him. Ravana suggests to him to take the form of a golden deer and entice Sita.[87] Mareecha agrees and Ravana leaves the place.

Tulasi: Ravana goes to Mareecha, narrates the story of Shoorpanakha's disfigurement and the death of Khara and his forces at the hands of Rama, and his desire to take revenge against him. He asks:

> "Do you assume the deceptive guise of a deer to trick him so that I may carry off the princess?"[88]

Mareecha advises him not to make an enemy of Rama for 'he is the Lord of all creation in the form of man with the power of life and death in hand.[89] But Ravana is not pleased with his advice. He abuses him. Mareecha thinks that in the circumstances death is inevitable to him. He prefers death at the hands of Rama[90] and so he agrees to act up to Ravana's desire to disguise himself as a golden deer. He however feels happy that he will be shortly seeing the Lord again and again turning back when he will be following him with bow and arrow.[91]

There is very little difference in this scene among the four epics. Valmiki is somewhat elaborate in the discussion between Ravana and Mareecha, but does not suggest the idea of salvation in Mareecha to die at the hands of Rama.

85. *Ibid.*, (3-7-203)
86. 'Kamba Ramayanam', (3-7-207)
87. *Ibid.*, (3-7-209)
88. 'Ram Charit Manas', (3-31-1)
89. *Ibid.*, (3-31-2)
90. *Ibid.*, (3-38-3)
91. *Ibid.*, (3-32)

In Adhyatma Ramayana, Ravana decides to stand against Rama and abduct Sita so that he may either be killed by Rama thus attaining salvation or else get Sita herself.[92] But when Ravana raises his sword to slay Mareecha the latter agrees to the foul play in the belief that he would get death at the hands of Rama.[93]. Both come to Panchavati.

It is thus clear that Kambar has followed Valmiki while Tulasi Adhyatma Ramayana. It may however be noted that:—

(a) Ravana meets Mareecha twice in Valmiki but only once in the other three works.

(b) In Kambar, Mareecha at first dissuades Ravana, but in view of his stubbornness, advises him to get Sita in open fight with Rama. This is not approved of by Ravana for the reason that Sita may commit suicide if Rama dies in battle and then his object will be frustrated. This dialogue does not find place in the other three works.

(c) In Kambar, as in Valmiki, Mareecha finally agrees to disguise himself as a golden deer only due to the fear of Ravana, but in Tulasi as in Adhyatma Ramayana, Mareecha agrees with pleasure for getting salvation at the hands of Rama.

7. *Death of Mareecha:*

Kambar: With feelings for his own relations on one side and the fear of Ravana on the other, Mareecha goes to Panchavati like a fish going in poisonous water[94] assuming the form of a golden deer. Sita who was then plucking flowers becomes enamoured of it. She wants Rama to catch it for her. Rama goes to see the deer but Lakshmana dissuades him stating that it is a false deer. Rama over rules him. Sita fears that in the meanwhile it may run away, and takes Rama to the spot. Rama agrees to catch it 'due to the good fortune of the gods.' Still Lakshmana dissuades them both by saying that it will be to no purpose to pursue

92. 'Adhyatma Ramayana', (3-7-32)
93. *Ibid.*, (3-7-36)
94. 'Kamba Ramayanam', (3-7-211)

the deer.[95] Sita expresses her keen desire to have the deer, and to please her Rama starts. Even then Lakshmana tries to stop him saying that it will be finally found to be a false deer sent to deceive them. Rama still says that even if it be a false one it will die in no time by his arrow thus killing a demon.[96] Otherwise it will be caught. Lakshmana still persists that Rama should not pursue the deer and offers to get the deer himself. But Sita jocularly asks whether it is not possible for Rama to get it.[97] Rama pursues the deer and Lakshmana stays back guarding Sita. Rama chases the deer and wonders if what Lakshmana had stated would come to be true. Now the deer runs far away, but Rama finally sends his unfailing shaft at it and kills the deer. Mareecha falls dead like a hillock in his real form crying aloud 'Sita! Lakshmana!' imitating the voice of Rama himself.[98] Rama praises Lakshmana for his farsightedness and feels sad for Sita. He however hopes that she may be consoled by Lakshmana. Rama returns quickly thinking that delay may result in some harm.

Tulasi: Mareecha appears as a very beautiful golden deer before Sita who requests Rama to get it for the use of its hide. Now, Rama knowing all the causes, starts to fulfil his mission for the gods,[99] with bow and arrow, advising Lakshmana to look after Sita with thought, wisdom and force. The deer runs off seeing the Lord coming, and Rama chases it with the bow stretched. Now the poet says:

> "He whom the Veda calls 'not thus', whom Shiva cannot grasp by contemplation, chases the illusory deer".[100]

It comes near and goes far, visible and invisible, thus going a long way. Then Rama sends a sure shaft killing it. The deer falls down in its real form crying aloud the name of Lakshmana at first but later repeating the name of Rama mentally.[101] Rama in appreciation of this gives to Mareecha a place in his celestial abode in the heavens, 'which is difficult even for sages'.[102] Rama returns quickly.

95. *Ibid.*, (3-7-230)
96. *Ibid.*, (3-7-233)
97. *Ibid.*, (37-237)
98. *Ibid.*, (3-7-250)
99. 'Ram Charit Manas', (3-33-3)
100. *Ibid.*, (3-33-6)
101. *Ibid.*, (3-33-8)
102. *Ibid.*, (3-33-9)

In Valmiki, Sita seeing the deer on her way back after plucking flowers calls Rama and Lakshmana. They come. Lakshmana suspects the deer to be Mareecha and telling them of its nature, presses them to go back to the cottage. But Rama goes after the deer for its hide and flesh or at least to kill the demon, if it be so, asking Lakshmana to take care of Sita and to remind Jatayu also. After following it to a very long distance, Rama kills it, and the deer falls down in its real form crying, 'Ah Sita! Ah Lakshmana!' With worry and fear, Rama returns after killing another deer and brings its flesh.

In Adhyatma Ramayana, Rama understands the foul play of Ravana. Sita asks for, the very deer for playing. Rama starts to get the deer asking Lakshmana to take care of Sita. Lakshmana tells that the deer is Mareecha in a false form,[103] but Rama still leaves the place to please Sita. After going some distance, he feels sure of its false nature and shoots an arrow at it. It falls down in the form of the real Mareecha crying 'Oh Lakshmana! Save me', in Rama's voice. As he is shot by Rama, his spirit gets into Rama himself, creating thereby a wonder in the minds of the gods. Rama returns fast greatly perturbed.

In this scene the notable points are the following:—

(a) In Kambar and Valmiki, the deer comes before Sita when she is returning after plucking flowers, whereas in Tulasidas and Adhyatma, all the three are in the cottage at that time.

(b) In Kambar and Valmiki, Rama does not seem to know the foul play, but in the other two, he knows it.

(c) It is only in Tulasi Ramayana that Lakshmana does not seem to understand the deer as Mareecha.

(d) Lakshmana offers himself to catch the deer only in Kambar.

(e) In Tulasi, as in Adhyatma Ramayana, Mareecha attains salvation after his death, whereas it is not so stated in the other two works.

(f) Rama kills the deer for its hide in Tulasi and Adhyatma Ramayana. In Valmiki it is also for its flesh. Hence as it transformed

103. *Ibid.*, (3-7-9)

itself into Mareecha, Rama kills another deer on the way and carries its flesh home. In Kambar, Sita wants the deer to be her playmate.

8. *Sita and Lakshmana:*

Kambar: Sita is much worried and frightened on hearing a voice of Rama asking for succour, and finding Lakshmana to be reluctant to go, says with rage that he is not fit to even stand near her. Lakshmana calmly explains to her the might of Rama and that no harm can ever happen to him, even if the whole world stands against him, but with no effect. Sita says that she will die in the fire.[104] Lakshmana then takes leave of her saying that he is prepared to obey her and that none can overcome destiny. He goes in search of Rama telling her that Jatayu, the king of vultures will look after her.

Tulasi: Hearing a pathetic voice of Rama, Sita gets frightened and asks Lakshmana to go forthwith to help Rama, but he says smiling that even a slight bend of an eye-brow of Rama will create and destroy the universe and as such, no harm can ever happen to him. But 'Sita utters certain wounding words' which perturbs the mind of Lakshmana,[105] due to the influence of Vishnu. He leaves the place in search of Rama, making the local gods responsible for Sita's safety.

In this picture, Valmiki's Sita becomes so angry with Lakshmana that she accuses him as an enemy of Rama in the guise of a brother and that he does not go even in such a critical situation just because of his secret passion for her. Seeing Lakshmana again advising her relating the great prowess of Rama, Sita gets greatly angry and says that he has come purposely on the instigation of Bharata, and that she will leave her life before him if he fails to go in search of Rama.[106] Feeling the unbearable insult, Lakshmana sets forth.

In Adhyatma Ramayana also, Sita accuses Lakshmana that he has been sent by Bharata and that she will commit suicide allowing none else to touch her.[107]

104. *Ibid.,* (3-8-13)
105. 'Ram Charit Manas', (3-34-3)
106. 'Valmiki Ramayana', (3-45)
107. 'Adhyatma Ramayana', (3-7-33, 34)

In this picture the noteworthy points are:

(a) In Kambar, Lakshmana leaves the place saying that she will commit suicide by fire, whereas in Tulasi she utters 'certain wounding words' suggestive of the base motive attributed to him by Sita in Valmiki and Adhyatma.

(b) In Valmiki and Adhyatma, Sita suspects Lakshmana as a person sent by Bharata to bring about Rama's ruin. Kambar and Tulasidas avoid this.

(c) In Kambar, Valmiki and Adhyatma, Sita threatens of extreme action, i.e. suicide to make Lakshmana go. In Tulasi it is only 'certain wounding words' and she does not state about sucidie.

(d) In Kambar, when Lakshmana departs, he says that Jatayu will look after her. In Tulasi it is the local gods who are responsible for the protection of Sita.

9. *Abduction of Sita:*

Kambar: Lakshmana goes out of the cottage in search of Rama, and there comes Ravana disguised as a hermit, lean with a tripe staff in hand, chanting Vedas with veena. Innocent Sita welcomes him. Ravana sees her. 'Intoxicated with the sight of her beauty' he feels sorry for not having a thousand unwinking eyes,[108] and that his life of three and a half crores of years will be too little for him to enjoy her.[109] He feels like offering her all that he has and himself becoming her slave,[110] but then thinks that all should be given to Shoorpanakha who gave him the information about that damsel. the crown of beauty. He sits an the seat offered by her and asks about the inmates of the cottage and herself. Sita replies suitably and enquires about him. He relates his (Ravana's) great achievements of the past and the present pompous positions. This in the words of the poet:

108. 'Kamba Ramayanam', (3-8-29)
109. *Ibid.*, (3-8-30)
110. *Ibid.*, (3-8-31)
111. *Ibid.*, (3-8-32)

"Though countless are the beautious damsels the
Desire to call him Lord, he hasn't given
His heart to one of them; he is searching earth
And heaven for one who could delight his heart.
I passed these days in Lanka where he reigns:
But as a longing came on me to join
My friends in holy endeavour, I left
His realms and am come back to Janasthana".[112]

But he does not tell his name or about his person. So Sita asks him the reason for his living in the land of demons, to which he says that the demons are not bad persons like the gods and are really good people of his type. But Sita says that one who is with the demons will also be a bad person. Feeling that Sita has begun to suspect him, he tries to smooth it down by saying:

"And thou must call to mind, O Janaki,
* * * that when the Rakshasas do rule
The worlds without a peer, what can we do
Of holy endeavour unless we walk
Their way and earn their friendship and their love?"[113]

Now Ravana, the hermit, asks Sita whether man also can kill the demons to which she, answering in affirmative states about the death of Viradha, Khara and his huge forces adding that all the demons will find their end soon.[114] This makes him angry. He speaks of the prowess of Ravana of twenty shoulders, but Sita giving the example of the death of Kartaveeryarjuna, the thousand headed, by a man Parashurama emphasises the greatness of man.[115] This brings out the real Ravana from his disguished hermit form. Sita is greatly frightened. aRavana in trying to console her, says:

"Be not alarmed, my darling Swan ! * * *
While I on my unbending serried heads
Do bear on each a crown, and goddesses
Bedecked with jewel serve at your proud feet,

112. *Ibid.*, (3-8-49, 50)
113. *Ibid.*, (3-8-55)
114. *Ibid.*, (3-8-59)
115. *Ibid.*, (3-8-63)

Do thou deign share with me the monarchy
Of fourteen worlds."[116]

Sita getting wild closes her ears and chides him saying:

* * * *

"What said you Rakshasa vile?

* * * *

Long ere the cruel darts like thunder strike,
If you desire the safety of your life,
And would hide, fly, fly away!"[117]

But Ravana says that the arrows of her husband cannot do any harm to him but instead will only fall like flowers on his stoney chest. He still entreats her:

"O goddess thou to Her on lotus bloom!
To my body nacked by the ill called love of thee,
Give life; and take the place exalted far—
Not e'en to Deva damsels giv'n to reach!"[118]

So saying, Ravana falls prostrate at her feet. Sita extremely terror-stricken as if pierced by a lance, now shouts for her lord and his brother for protection. Immediately, remembering the curse on him, Ravana uproots the very hut with her upto one Yojana with his pillar-like arms,[119] puts it in his plane and flies through the air. Sita laments and cries out to Rama and Lakshmana, Bharata and Shatrughna and all things of nature for protection. Ravana mocks at her, but Sita tells him that he has taken to foul method like a coward due to fear,[120] to which Ravana answers that it is disgraceful for a strong personality like him to fight with weak persons like men. Sita says that for him, prowess lies only in

116. *Ibid.*, (3-8-68)
117. *Ibid.*, (3-8-70)
118. *Ibid.*, (3-8-72)
119. *Ibid.*, (3-8-74) See also 'Ram Charit Manas', (1-210)
For one who can in play uproot Kailasha Mountain itself, this act is not very difficult.
120. *Ibid.*, (3-8-84)

cunningly abducting chaste ladies and not in straight fight and as such nothing is good or bad to men of his type.[121]

By this time comes Jatayu.

Tulasi: Ravana comes in the form of a hermit 'like a dog' and tells stories of various types expressing his royal power, threat and love. Sita says that his words are like those of a scoundrel.[122] Now Ravana reveals his real form and tells his name terrifying Sita. She with courage tells him just to wait and that her lord is come. Ravana feels ashamed and 'internally bows at her feet with happiness'.[123] Ravana then with rage, seizes her, seats her in his chariot and flies through the air but due to apprehension is not able to drive it.[124] Sita realises her mistake and cries aloud to Rama and Lakshmana which attracts Jatayu.

This scene is the climax of Ramayana and hence is the same in all the four, but with certain deviations. Valmiki's picturisation of this scene is more or less the same as in Kambar with the exception that Ravana is a little too blunt and vulgar in his approach though in the disguise of a hermit, when he says:

"Thy charms of smile and teeth and hair
And winning eyes, O thou most fair,
Steal all my spirit, as the flow
Of rivers mines the bank below."[125]

According to V. V. S. Iyer, "his speech also lacks consistency with itself. For while very soon, without any further ado, he is going to announce himself as Ravana, the words—

"Leave, lady, leave this lone retreat
In forest wilds for thee unmeet,
Where giants fierce and strong assume
All shapes and wander in the gloom.

121. *Ibid.*, (3-8-86)
122. 'Ram Charit Manas', (3-34-6)
123. *Ibid.*, (3-34-8)
124. *Ibid.*, (3-34)
125. 'Valmiki Ramayana', (3-46)

Here giants roam a savage race,
What led thee to so dire a place?"[126]

are more calculated to injure than help his cause.''[127]

Speaking about himself and his love for her, he says:
"Lord of the giant legions, * * *

* * * *

Ravana the Rakshas King am I:
Now when thy gold-like form I view,

* * * *

My love, O thou of perfect mould,
For all my dames is dead and cold
A thousand fairest women, torn
From many a land my home adorn.
But come, loveliest lady, be
The queen of every dame and me."[128]

Finally assuming his real form and staring at Sita, he says:

"My noble lady! If you desire for a husband famous in the three worlds, then accept me. I am worthy of you in every respect. It will be a great honour to you if you serve me all your life. I shall never do you any harm. Leave aside your attachment for Ram and be devoted to me. Ah, foolish girl, seeming wise, how could you be attached to that stupid Ram with a brief span of life who at the words of a woman has come to this fearful forest in exile, leaving behind his kingdom, friends and relations?"[129]

So saying he pounces upon Sita and holding her hands with his left hand and clasping her thighs with the right, he gets into a magic car drawn by asses and carries her away through air 'with Sita in his embrace.'[130] Hearing the bitter lamentation of Sita, the sleeping Jatayu awakes and beholds Ravana and Sita.

126. *Ibid.*, (3-46)
127. 'Kamba Ramayanam-A study' — V. V. S. Aiyar, p. 242.
128. 'Valmiki Ramayana', (3-47)
129. *Ibid.*, (3-49) See also 'The Ramayan' — M. L. Sen, p. 517.
130. *Ibid.*, (3-49)

In Adhyatma Ramayana, the hermit on the very first enquiry of Sita tells that he is Ravana, the king of demons, stating his objects also, belittling Rama.[131] She warns him telling about the prowess of her husband and compares him with an ass. Ravana comes out in his original form and uprooting the earth below her with his nails,[132] carries her away in his chariot through the air. She cries for protection and there comes Jatayu immediately from the summit of a hill.

This is an important scene described differently by different writers. The notable features here are:

(a) Kambar's hermit-Ravana comes singing Veda on veena with triple staff whereas, in the other three he comes just as any other ordinary hermit.

(b) The initial conversation between the hermit and Sita is very elaborate with perfect decency and full of arguments and counter-arguments in Kambar, whereas Valmiki though elaborate, has gone blunt and vulgar. In the other two it is very short.

(c) In Kambar, Ravana prostrates at the feet of Sita after assuming his original form.

(d) In Kambar, Ravana uproots the very hut with Sita in it upto a distance of one yojana and does not at all touch Sita, evidently remembering the curse of Punjikasthala, Rambha, Vedavati and others. In Adhyatma too he uproots the ground below her with his hand for the same reason. But in Valmiki he holds her thighs holding her hair and carries her away in his embrance. In Tulasi also he clasps her and puts her in the chariot.

(e) Before Ravana seizes Sita to put her into his magic chariot, Tulasi's Ravana bows to Sita's feet mentally feeling happy at the forthcoming contact with the God-incarnate.

(f) In Valmiki, the magic car of Ravana is drawn by asses.

131. 'Adhyatma Ramayana', (3-7-45, 46)
132. *Ibid.*, (3-7-51)

10. *Death of Jatayu*:

Kambar: Jatayu comes encouraging Sita and remonstrating Ravana and fights with him. Ravna falls semiconscious,[133] when Jatayu mocks at his weakness and breaks his bow, arrow, lance and the chariot. But Ravana gets up and succeeds in clipping off a wing of Jatayu with 'Chandrahasa' the sword of Shiva. This was possible due to the power of the weapon and to the fact that Jatayu was destined to die then.[134] Sita laments bitterly in her utter distress and swoons. Ravana thinking that the hindrances are once for all over, flies off. Jatayu cries with grief seeing Ravana running away with Sita and falls down half asleep. Sita is carried away to Lanka and confined in the Asoka garden.[135]

Lakshmana meets Rama. Rama worriedly asks him the reason for his coming and gets the answer. Rama quickly goes to the cottage. Not finding Sita he feels like the soul leavnig the body for a while and not finding it on return,[136] or like a poor man whose wealth with its container is stolen away.[137] His mind begins revolving, and so does the universe. Both follow the track of the chariot, which disappears after a certain distance. Both go ahead in the direction towards the south, and see a flag with the sign of Veena on it.[138] Rama understands that Jatayu ought to have fought with the person carrying away Sita. They proceed further and find a broken bow, a lance, a quiver, a shield, the fallen horses and also the charioteer drenched in blood. They then reach the place where Jatayu was lying. There they see certain ornaments of males. Rama is led to think that many persons should have fought with Jatayu. Lakshmana feels that it could have been Ravana himself.[139] Rama then sees Jatayu lying on the earth and laments. Jatayu feels a little happy to see Rama and Lakshmana, and tells them what happened. Rama becomes extremely angry and swears to put an end to not only the Rakshasas but also the gods and all belonging

133. 'Kamba Ramayanam', (3-8-126)
134. *Ibid.*, (3-8-128)
135. *Ibid.*, (3-8-146)
136. *Ibid.*, (3-8- 158)
137. *Ibid.*, (3-8-159)
138. *Ibid.*, (3-8-167)
139. *Ibid.*, (3-8-178)

to this earth. Jatayu advises him not to be angry with the gods and other people, and cheers up Rama and Lakshmana. Rama asks as to where the demon Ravana has gone. Jatayu not being able to give any reply falls down dead,[140] and goes to heaven. Lakshmana says that the only thing for them now to do is to kill the Rakshasas.[141] Rama performs the cremation to Jatayu.

Tulasi: Jatayu hears the grievous moans of Sita, recognises her and attacks Ravana like a thunderbolt. But Ravana finding him to be the old Jatayu, says that he is going to die at his hands. Jatayu however advises him to leave Sita and go his own way lest he with all the members of his race should get burnt to ashes in the fire of the anger of Rama.[142] Ravana remains silent and Jatayu makes a vigorous attack making him fall down on earth. Jatayu immediately puts aside Sita and tears the body of Ravana with his beak making him unconscious. Ravana takes out his fierce sword and cuts off a wing of Jatayu who falls down on the earth reciting the name of Rama.[143] Ravana then flies off with Sita in the chariot. Sita finds some monkeys on a hill and throws down her dresses.[144] Ravana goes to the Ashoka garden and is vexed in showing love and terror to her, but with no effect. Sita repeats the name of the Lord and contemplates upon his form as he went after the deer.[145]

Rama sees Lakshmana coming, ascertains what happened and is greatly worried. Both go to the cottage. Sita is not found. Rama is distressed like an ordinary mortal and cries:

> "Alas for Janaki, the queen of virtue! Alas for Sita, the pure perfection of beauty, goodness, faithfulness and loyal love!"

Lakshmana tries to console him but he asks all the trees and creepers as he goes:

> "O Ye birds and beasts, O Ye swarms of bees, nave you seen the fawn-eyed Sita?"[146]

140. *Ibid.*, (3-8-214)
141. *Ibid.*, (3-8-218)
142. 'Ram Charit Manas', (3-35-8, 9)
143. *Ibid.*, (3-35-11)
144. *Ibid.*, (3-35-13)
145. *Ibid.*, (3-36)
146. *Ibid.*, (3-37-4, 5)

Rama continues:

> "All things of nature like parrots, doves, deer, fish, jasmine buds, pomegranates, the lotus and the autumn moon, the serpent, the elephant and lion etc., can now hear their own praises sung. * * * Hearken, Janaki! Now that you are no longer here, they are all as happy as if they had won a kingdom."[147]

Thus Rama goes on searching for Sita with tears, like some poor lover who had lost his love,[148] like a mortal man. They find after going some distance Jatayu uttering the name of Rama. Seeing Rama, Jatayu forgets all his pain. He says about the Ten-headed and his actions. He adds that he is keeping his life only to have a sight of Rama.[149] Inspite of Rama's wish Jatayu leaves his life 'after having a complete look of Rama'. Rama grants him heaven for his devotion and asks him not to tell Dasharatha in heaven about the abduction of Sita.[150] Jatayu praying for eternal devotion leaves the body getting divine form and goes to heaven. Rama performs his cremation.

This scene is practically the same in Valmiki and Adhyatma Ramayanas too. In Valmiki, the sleeping Jatayu gets up hearing Sita's lament. Then starts the fight as between two mountains. Jatayu breaks down Ravana's arms and the chariot with the mules, and tears off his body with scratches by his beak and claws. But Ravana cuts his wings with his sword and also legs and the side-ribs. Jatayu falls on the ground. Ravana flies away. Sita seeing five monkeys on Kishkindha hills, throws down her dresses and ornaments.[151] Ravana carries her away to Lanka. He sends eight of his selected strong Rakshasas to Panchavati as spies. Ravana shows his palace and its make up. He puts his head at her feet requesting her to quench his passion, accept queenship of thirtytwo crores of Rakshasas and take him as a servant. Seeing that she does not

147. *Ibid.*, (3-37-6, 7)
148. *Ibid.*, (3-37-8)
149. *Ibid.*, (3-38-2)
150. *Ibid.*, (3-38)
151. 'Valmiki Ramayana', (3-54)

yield, he gives her twelve months time failing which, he says, her body would be cut to pieces for breakfast. He puts her in the Ashoka garden under the guard of the demonesses. Here Rama and Lakshmana meet. They do not find Sita in the cottage, and Rama laments bitterly enquiring everywhere about Sita. Lakshmana consoles him but with no effect. They meet Jataya and hear from him what had happened. Jatayu tells them about Ravana, consoles Rama and leaves his life. Rama performs the cremation and both go ahead in search of Sita.

In Adhyatma Ramayana, the scene is short with only the major incidents. However, when Rama returns to the cottage, he thinks of the Maya Sita. Lakshmana is not in the know of things. Rama decides to act as an ordinary mortal and go to Lanka to end the entire rakshasas, and get Sita back from fire[152] thus fulfilling the prayer of Brahma. At the end, Rama gives his own heavenly abode to Jatayu.[153]

In this scene the notable features are:

(a) In Kambar, Jatayu is not able to name the abductor and dies. In Tulasi and the other two, Jatayu tells them of the ten-headed and his abode.

(b) In Tulasi as in Adhyatma Ramayana, Jatayu repeats the holy name of Rama and thereby goes to heaven. In Kambar, Jatayu attains heaven on account of his service and sacrifice as in Valmiki.

(c) In Tulasi, Sita after being placed in the Ashoka garden goes on repeating the name of her Lord as in Adhyatma Ramayana, and is contemplating upon the form as he went chasing the deer. This is not related in Kambar as also in Valmiki where it is stated that she became unconscious, thinking of her husband and brother-in-law.

(d) In Kambar, parental affection rather than devotion towards Rama motivates Jatayu, whereas in Tulasi, Valmiki and Adhyatma, it is devotion which makes him sacrifice his very life and stay till Rama's arrival.

152. 'Adhyatma Ramayana', (3-8-5)

(e) In Kambar as in Valmiki, Rama is extremely distressed at the loss of Sita just as any other mortal would be but in Tulasi following Adhyatma Ramayana, the feeling of worry and distress appears to be fleigned with the inner knowledge of the event to follow and of the reality behind things.

(f) In Tulasidas, Rama requests Jatayu not to tell his father about the abduction of Sita after going to heaven.

(g) Valmiki's Ravana is a little too harsh when he tells Sita in Ashoka Garden that, should she not yield to him in twelve months, her body will be cut to pieces for his breakfast. Kambar and Tulasidas have avoided it. Adhyatma Ramayana also does not refer to this.

11. *Ayomukhi and Lakshmana*:

Kambar: Rama with a mixed feeling of despair, insult and anxiety goes with Lakshmana towards the south, greately worried, searching for Sita. Rama feels thirsty and asks Lakshmana to get him some water.[154] Lakshmana goes. On the way fierce demoness Ayomukhi vomitting fire and in form like a hillock with teeth to crush even elephants and eyes like ditches[155] approaches him expressing love. Lakshmana not agreeing to her request, she carries him away moving her hands over him.[156] Rama due to the long absence of Lakshmana is greatly worried and searches for him. He even thinks of committing suicide.[157] Meanwhile Lakshmana cuts off her nose, ears and breasts, and comes away to Rama. They get water with the help of Varunastra. They go ahead.

Tulasi: As in Adhyatma Ramayana, the Ayomukhi incident does not find a place.

Valmiki has narrated this incident in a different form. Lakshmana is going in front of Rama, both searching for the place of

153. *Ibid.*, (3-8-54)
154. 'Kamba Ramayanam', (3-9-38)
155. *Ibid.*, (3-9-43)
156. *Ibid.*, (3-9-61)
157. *Ibid.*, (3-9-77)

Ravana. Ayomukhi approaches Lakshmana with extreme passion and embraces him.[158] Her nose, ears and breasts are cut by Lakshmana and she runs away shrieking.

It may be noted that this incident has seen utilised by Kambar to show the extreme attachment of Rama to Lakshmana. Kambar though taking the incident from Valmiki, has deviated from him in as much as the demoness Ayomukhi comes to Lakshmana when he goes leaving Rama to fetch him some water, thereby separating Rama from Lakshmana.

12. *Salvation to Kabandha:*

Aranya Kanda in Kambar is very descriptive and elaborate Giant Kabandha with his mouth in the stomach enfolds all creatures including Rama and Lakshmana with his long arms for his diet. Rama and Lakshmana think that they are the army of demons or great snakes.[159] Lakshmana remembering the words his mother,[160] goes ahead of Rama to fight with Kabandha and both cut his shoulders. Kabandha is rid of the curse, gets his original form, ascends the sky paying tributes to Rama, the Supreme God.[161] Then on being asked, he relates his earlier story and the curse which had befallen him and his salvation through Rama. Then he suggests to them to proceed further, meet Sabari and do as per her words in their quest for Sita. He also says that they may befriend Sugriva, the son of the Sun, at the Rishyamooka mountain and do the needful with his help.[162] Rama and Lakshmana stay for that night in the ashrama of the saint Matanga on their way according to the suggestion of Kabandha.

Tulasi: On the way, Kabandha approaches and Rama kills him.[163] Then getting relieved of his curse he relates the cause of his curse and relief therefrom, to Rama. Rama then advises him on the path of righteousness and says:

158. 'Valmiki Ramayana', (3-69)
159. 'Kamba Ramayanam', (3-10-7, 10)
160. *Ibid.*, (3-10-31)
161. *Ibid.*, (3-10-41)
162. *Ibid.*, (3-10-56, 57)
163. 'Ram Charit Manas', (3-40-3)

"I declare to you that I am not pleased with those who injure Brahmins. He who in thought and word and deed does sincere service to those gods on earth may command myself and Brahma and Siva, and all the other deities. A Brahmin is to be reverenced even though he curse and beat you, and use harsh words—so say saints. A Brahmin must be revered though he be devoid of goodness or virtue, but a Sudra never, however virtuous and learned."[164]

Then Kabandha goes to heaven.

This is a minor incident in the story and the four have related it each in his own way. Valmiki pictures Lakshmana greatly frightened and discouraged. Rama encourages him.[165] Finally they succeed in cutting off Kabandha's limbs and releasing him from his curse. He requests them to burn his body to ashes. They do so. Kabandha attains a divine form and advises them the way to get back Sita by befriending Sugriva at the Rishyamooka Mountain after meeting Shabari on the way and staying at the Ashrama of Matanga Rishi.[166] Lakshmana in Adhyatma Ramayana is quite courageous and cuts off the left hand of Kabandha and Rama the right. The scene follows Valmiki with the difference that the divine Kabandha pays his reverence to Rama as God, the Supreme Being.[167] He gets into a plane and goes to the world of Visnnu at the end.

In this scene the salient points are the following:

(a) In Valmiki, Lakshmana gets frightened and unnerved at the sight of the fearful demon Kabandha.

(b) Tulasidas indulges in making Rama advise the transformed Kabandha about the path of righteousness including the greatness of Brahmins at length.

(c) Kambar has utilised this scene to show the divine effect of Rama's touch[168] as in the case of Ahalya and has not made Kabandha

164. *Ibid.*, (3-40-4 to 3-41-1)
165. 'Valmiki Ramayana', (3-69)
166. *Ibid.*, (3-73)
167. 'Adhyatma Ramayana', (3-9-52)
168. 'Kamba Ramayanam', (3-10-40)

request Rama to burn him to ashes for getting back the divine form, as is stated in Valmiki and also Adhyatma Ramayana. Tulasidas finishes the whole scene in a few lines without reference to either of the pictures.

(d) Tulasidas's Kabandha offers no suggestion to Rama for his further action whereas Kambar as in the other two epics has made Kabandha give suggestions to Rama to meet Shabari and Sugriva.

(e) We find only in Kambar and Adhyatma Ramayana the transformed Kabandha paying tributes to Rama as the Supreme Being.

13. *Salvation to Shabari:*

Kambar: Rama and Lakshmana meet Shabari at the Matanga Ashrama. Rama enquires of her welfare. She feels happy to see Rama and gives select fruits for them to eat. She says that Lord Shiva, Brahma, Indra and other gods have requested her to go over to their worlds after receiving Rama.[169] She then tells them the way to the place of Sugriva and happily leaves her body by the power of her penance and attains eternal salvation. Rama and Lakshmana go ahead and reach Pampa Lake.

Tulasi: Rama and Lakshmana come to the ashrama of Shabari. She falls at their feet[170] with devotion. She offers them beautiful seats and then juicy fruits and roots. They accept them with pleasure. She requests Rama to give her the eternal devotional mind. Rama grants the request explaining the nine types of devotional methods.[171] Rama then requests her to tell him the whereabouts of Sita.[172] She suggests to him to go and befriend Sugriva at the lake of Pampa, and that he will tell him all about Sita. So saying, she bows at his feet again and again telling that he knows what is to happen.[173] She also relates to Rama their future events

169. *Ibid.*, (3-11-4)
170. 'Ram Charit Manas', (3-41-4).
171. *Ibid.*, (3-42-4)
172. *Ibid.*, (3-42-5)
173. *Ibid.*, (3-42-6)

(as heard from the Matanga Sage).[174] Then she goes to the world of eternity, never to return, leaving her body in the fire of her austerities. Rama leaves that forest and proceeds further relating very many stories to Lakshmana, like a man full of the pangs of separation.

This incident is similar in all the four epics. However, in Valmiki, Shabari takes them round the Matanga forest relating the importance of the several spots. Finally, on the permission of Rama, she falls into fire and goes to heaven in a luminous form[175] and reaches the abode of great souls in the world of Brahma by the dint of her penance. Rama and Lakshmana go ahead as per the words of Kabandha and reach Pampa Lake in the Rishyamooka mountain.

In Adhyatma Ramayana, Shabari washes the feet of Rama and Lakshmana with devotion,[176] and then offers heavenly fruits. She tells them that Matanga sage before leaving for heaven, had already told her about the arrival of Rama, the incarnate. Rama relates to her the efficacy of devotion and its nine types, and then enquires about Sita. She informs him about Ravana saying that he (Rama) already knows every thing and suggests to befriend Sugriva at Rishyamooka. Then she enters into fire and attains salvation.

In this scene which is the same in all, the treatment alone differs. The notable features are:

(a) Kambar has treated her as a great saint as in Valmiki, but Tulasidas has treated her as one of the low caste women as in Adhyatma Ramayana.

(b) In Kambar only, Shiva, Brahma, Indra and other gods are said to have invited Shabari.

(c) She attains eternal salvation by the power of her penance and does not fall into fire in Kambar. In Tulasi, she is said to enter only into the fire of her own austerities. But in Valmiki

174. 'Ram Charit Manas' — Commentary by S. S. Das, p. 699.
175. 'Valmiki Ramayana', (3-74)
176. 'Adhyatma Ramayana', (3-10-7)

and Adhyatma Ramayanas, she is said to have fallen into fire before going to heaven.

(d) Tulasidas as in Adhyatma Ramayana, makes Shabari request Rama for pure devotion to him. This offers an occasion to Rama to describe the nine varieties of devotion. No such request is made in Kambar and Valmiki.

(e) When Rama asks Shabari about the place of Sita, Tulasidas's Shabari as in Adhyatma Ramayana, tells Rama at first that he himself knows every thing that is to happen and relates the full story. No such statement or story is found in Kambar or Valmiki.

(f) Kambar's Shabari tells Rama to befriend Sugriva at Rishyamooka, which is not found in Valmiki. But Tulasi and Adhyatma Ramayana speak of it. In Valmiki Ramayana, it is only Kabandha who suggests this to Rama.

14. *Nature and Rama:*

Kambar: No specific lessons or teachings are drawn out of nature and described here before arriving at Rishyamooka mountain.

Tulasi: Rama and Lakshmana go ahead. On the way, Rama feels insulted seeing birds and animals in couples.[177] He tells Lakshmana that the herd of deers are running away seeing us coming but the hinds say that we are in search of a golden deer and that they can be at ease. He says further that the elephants seem to teach him:

> "However carefully the scriptures are studied, they must be read over again and again; however well a king may be served, one can never regard him as subject to one's influence; and though one keep a wife next one's heart, if she be young, she is no more mastered than the scriptures or a king."[178]

Seeing the beautiful spring, Rama tells Lakshmana:

> "Bereft of my beloved, I look on it with dread. Kamadeva, finding me distressed by my loss and thinking me power-

177. 'Ram Charit Manas', (3-44-2)
178. *Ibid.*, (3-44-4, 5)

less and quite alone, has sped to the assault with the aid of the woods, the bees and the birds."[179]

Valmiki and Adhyatma Ramayanas also have not portrayed this aspect of the mental attitude of Rama.

Thus it is only Tulasida's Rama who has been struck by nature and the animals there in the above manner.

15. *Narada and Rama:*

Kambar: There is no mention of any meeting of Narada and Rama before the latter arrives at the Rishyamooka Mountain.

Tulasi: Rama with Lakshmana goes ahead and reaches the pure lake of Pampa, has a bath, and rests under a tree where many sages come and go happily. Now Narada finding Rama, the Lord Vishnu, 'Bereft of his beloved' thinks that Rama is now suffering troubles due to his curse.[180] He takes his Veena in hand and comes near Rama singing of his glory and prays for the boon of unflinching devotion at his feet, which is granted. Then Narada, finding Rama very happy, asks him the reason for not allowing him to marry Vishwamohini.[181] Rama explains to him the true nature of Womanhood, saying:

"Hearken, O Sage! Those who worship me relying on none other, I ever guard as a mother guards her child. * * * * Lust, wrath, greed, pride and all the other passions form the strong army of infatuation; but amongst them all, the most dangerous and tormenting foe is woman, illusion incarnate. The Puranas, the Vedas and the Saints declare that woman is the season of spring to the forest of delusion; and every woman, like the summer heat, dries up all the pools of prayer and penance and religious observance. * * * * A young and wanton woman is the root of all

179. *Ibid.*, (3-44)
180. *Ibid.*, (3-51-3)
181. *Ibid.*, (3-54-2)

> evil, a torment and the source of every woe. That was what I had in mind, O Sage, when I stood in your way."[182]

Narada feels greatly consoled and leaves the place singing the Grace of Lord Rama.

Valmiki and Adhyatma Ramayanas have not referred to this meeting of Narada with Rama.

It is only Tulasidas who has brought-in this meeting because Narada was deceived by Vishnu and this resulted in a curse from Narada and the consequent incarnation of Rama.[183] An answer was due from Vishnu and hence this scene only in Tulasi.

Miscellaneous:

Aranya Kanda in Kambar is very descriptive and elaborate containing 1204 stanzas. Tulasidas has been so very short on the whole that only one Chaupayi is offered for the Viradha incident and seven to Sharabhanga. Kambar has given one complete chapter of 73 stanzas for Viradha's incident and another complete chapter of 44 stanzas on Sharabhanga. So also in Agastya, Kambar devotes one full chapter as against 12 stanzas by Tulasidas. Same treatment is seen in the case of Jatayu and Shabari also. Valmiki is also elaborate but not Adhyatma Ramayana.

182. *Ibid.*, (3-54-3 to 3-55)
183. *Ibid.*, (1-65-3)

IV—KISHKINDHA KANDA

1. *Hanuman meets Rama*:

Kambar: Rama and Lakshmana climb the Rishyamooka Mountain. Sugriva sees them and hides in a cave frightened,[1] thinking that they are persons sent by Vali. Now Hanuman, knowing them not to be Vali's men, consoles Sugriva and other monkeys. He goes to Rama in the guise of a 'Brahmachari', wondering why hermits have bow and quiver.[2] He concludes that they could not be gods but only men from the movement of their eye-lids. As they appear to be ocean of grace, he stops for a while observing them and exclaims himself:

"How even tigers and pards look on them with tenderness, even as they would on their own cubs! Peakcocks and other

1. 'Kamba Ramayanam', (4-2-1)
2. *Ibid.*, (4-2-6)

birds fly in groups shading the delicate bodies of these strangers from the hot rays of the sun with their great ing over them as they walk on.[3] The burning stones on their way become soft and cool as honey-dripping flowers to their feet at every step. Even trees and plants worship him, bending down their heads when they come near. Are they Dharma's self? Are these beings gods indeed who wipe off the sorrows of living kind and give them salvation, burning away the inevitable fruits of their deeds? My very bones melt, the flood-gates of love are opened within my heart, and I see no limit or end to the effection that surges within me towards them!"[4]

He comes close to them as if to offer welcome. Rama asks who he is Hanuman tells him that he is the son of Vayu and Anjana Devi, and in turn enquires about them stating that he has come on orders from Sugriva, the son of the Sun God. Rama recognises his high qualities and learning, and tells Lakshmana that he may be even Brahma or Shiva himself. Hearing from Lakshmana about Rama and his position, Hanuman starts to bring Sugriva stating that his lost kingdom would be regained from Vali, the son of Indra. Hanuman prostrates to Rama but he objects to this as Hanuman is a learned and wise person of a high order.[5] Then Hanuman resumes his real form[6] and takes leave of them to bring Sugriva.

Tulasi: Seeing Rama and Lakshmana arriving near the Rishyam(ooka mountain, Sugriva is frightened. He asks Hanuman to go in the guise of a Brahmin, find out as to whether they are men sent by Vali and let him know by some sign, so that he may run away from that mountain. Hanuman accordingly goes in the form of a Hanuman suggests to him to befriend his master Sugriva for tracing Brahmin[7] and asks them who they are. He enquires whether they

3. Compare: 'Ram Charit Manas' (2-217) for Bharata and (2-114) for Rama-Sita and Lakshmana.
4. 'Kamba Ramayanam', (4-2-12 to 15)
5. 'Kamba Ramayanam', (4-2-33)
6. *Ibid.* (4-2-34)
7. 'Ram Charit Manas', (4-3-3)

are two of the Three Gods or Incarnations of the Supreme Being come to relieve the earth of its burden.[8] Rama tells his story and asks the Brahmin' who he is. Hanuman recognises the Lord, clasps his feet and sings his glory.[9] He also begs excuse for not recognising him due to illusion, and lack of wisdom. Hanuman resumes his real form and falls at his feet. Rama takes him up and embraces saying:

"You are twice as dear to me as Lakshmana."[10]

Sita with the help of his monkeys. He then carries them on his shoulders to Sugriva.

In this scene, the story being the same, the treatment differs from epic to epic. In Valmiki, Sugriva asks Hanuman to go as a spy in disguise and inform him by signs if they were men of Vali.[11] He goes in the form of a beggar, and gets to know of them. He informs them of Sugriva and on their consent carries them to Sugriva on his shoulders.

In Adhyatma Ramayana, Sugriva asks Hanman to go as a spy assuming the form of a Brahmin and inform him by his finger if they were men of Vali. Hanuman easily recognises Rama as the incarnation of Supreme God. From their conversation, Rama tells Lakshmana about Hanuman's great learning and purtiy of speech. Hanuman after knowing who they are and their position in life advises them to befriend Sugriva. Rama agrees stating that they may be of help to Sugriva.[12] Hanuman takes them on his shoulders to Sugriva in a jump.

Here the salient points to be noted are:

(a) In Kambar, Hanuman with his learning and wisdom, has greater power of understanding than in the three other epics inas-much-as he tells Sugriva and other monkeys that the two persons can never be men by Vali.

8. *Ibid.*, (4-3)
9. *Ibid.*, (4-4-4)
10. *Ibid.*, (4-5-4).
11. 'Valmiki Ramayana' (4-2)
12. 'Adhyatma Ramayana', (4-1-26)

(b) The disguished Hanuman in Tulasi Ramayan is sent in the guise of a Brahmin as in Adhyatma Ramayana, whereas Kambar portrays him only as a very learned 'Brahmachari', rich in words. In Valmiki, the disguise is in the form of a beggar.

(c) Only in Kambar, Rama objects to the prostration of Hanuman as he is a very learned person.

(d) In Tulasi, as in Valmiki and Adhyatma Ramayanas, Sugriva asks Hanuman to go as a *syp in disguise* to find out the identify of Rama and Lakshmana, but in Kambar it is Hanuman himself who takes the initiative.

(e) In Kambar and Tulasi, Hanuman recognises Rama to be god-incamate, as also in Adhyatma, but in Valmiki it is not so though Rama is understood to have the power to protect the whole earth.

(f) In Tulasi, as in Valmiki and Adhyatma, Hanuman carries Rama and Lakshmana on his shoulders to Sugriva, but in Kambar, he does not carry them on his shoulders, but goes alone to bring Sugriva to Rama.

(g) Kambar's Hanuman does not advise Rama to befriend Sugriva as in the other three epics.

2. *Sugriva and Rama:*

Kambar: Hanuman informs Sugriva about the arrival of Rama and Lakshmana and their greatness:

"O Sire, we are blessed indeed, beyond measure, both myself and thy race! For the Yama is come who has the force to destory Vali: We have crossed the sea of misery!"[13]

"Rama is Vishnu Himself worshipped by the Devas: For what man could have killed Mareecha who came disguised as a magic deer?"[14]

13. 'Kamba Ramayanam', (4-2-40)
14. *Ibid.*, (4-2-49)

and adds dancing that they need his friendship. On his advice Sugriva comes to Rama and seeing him feels assured about his being an incarnation of Vishnu[15] and believes that only some good fate has brought him over there for his relief. He states that due to the curse of the Matanga Rishi on Vali, he has taken refuge in the Rishyamooka mountain. Without any reserve, Sugriva requests Rama to help him and says that he depends entirely on him. Rama agrees[16] and swears to him life-friendship to the pleasure of gods and monkeys. Hanuman requests Rama to kindly visit the cottage of Sugriva and all go there. They have a feast of fruits, vegetables, roots etc. served by Hanuman and other monkeys. Rama finding no ladies in the house enquires of Sugriva whether he also is not having his wife.[17] The answer is, however, given by Hanuman in detail with the exploits and strength of Vali, his elder brother, adding that Vali had taken away Sugriva's wife. Rama's eyes turn red with rage. He promises to kill Vali and restore him the kingdom of Kishkindha[18] for—

"Could he who gave away a crown that was
By right his own to a brother to enjoy—
Could he forgive an elder brother, who
Had robbed the younger of his wife by force,
And now was hunting him upto death?"[19]

Sugriva feels happy but would be glad of proof of Rama's prowess. Hanuman suggests a test of piercing by one shaft one of the seven sala trees[20] which are like seven Meru hills. Sugriva agrees. Rama shoots one arrow through all the seven trees including the seven worlds underneath.[21] Sugriva pays deep reverence to Rama. Rama sees the hill-like skeleton of the Dundubhi giant and enquires about the same. Sugriva relates his story and his fight with Vali resulting in the curse of Matanga sage for throwing

15. 'Kamba Ramayanam',(4-3-18)
16. *Ibid.*, (4-3-25, 26)
17. *Ibid.*, (4-3-35)
18. *Ibid.*, (4-3-75)
19. *Ibid.*, (4-3-74)
20. *Ibid.* (4-3-83)
21. *Ibid.*, (4-4-14)

this corpse at his sacred place. Rama asks Lakshmana to throw it away; Lakshmana does it by the toe of his leg showing thereby his great strength.[22] Sugriva brings the clothes and ornaments of Sita which were thrown by her on her way to Lanka, at the sight of which Rama falls unconscious.[23] Sugriva consoles him. Hanuman also submits that Vali must first be killed and Sugriva crowned for getting an army of monkeys for the search of Sita.[24] Rama agrees and all go to Kishkinda.

Tulasi: Seeing Rama, Sugriva feels happy and bows at his feet. Hanuman introduces each other and conforms their friendship with fire to witness.[25] Lakshmana hereafter relates the story of Rama. Sugriva with tearful eyes assures Rama to get Sita back.[26] Then Sugriva relates how clothes were dropped by some one passing through the air crying 'Rama! Rama!' and produces the same. Rama presses them to his chest feeling sad.[27] Sugriva consoles him assuring of his help to get back Sita. Rama is encouraged. Sugriva relates the fight between Mayavi, the son of Mayasura and his brother Vali, the latter taking away his wife beating him like an enemy,[28] and that he lives at Rishyamooka as Vali cannot enter it due to a curse. Rama with rage promises to kill Vali with a Single arrow.[29] for one who does not keep up the friendship at the time of distress of the other is no friend. Rama asks Sugriva not to worry himself, assuring that he will fulfil his wishes.[30] Sugriva describes the great prowess of Vali, 'shows him Dundubhi's bones and the palm trees which Raghunath without an effort hurls away.'[31] Sugriva feels that Rama with such extraordinary strength was sure to kill Vali. His love for Rama also enhances. Wisdom dawns in him and he gets ready for absolute service, believing that all pleasures, property,

22. *Ibid.*, (4-5-14)
23. *Ibid.*, (4-6-9)
24. *Ibid.*, (4-6-28)
25. 'Ram Charit Manas', (4-6).
26. *Ibid.*, (4-7-1)
27. *Ibid.*, (4-7-3)
28. *Ibid*,. (4-8-6)
29. *Ibid.*, (4-8)
30. *Ibid.*, (4-9-5)
31. *Ibid.*, (4-9-6)

family and honour are obstacles in the path of devotion to Rama.[32] Rama with his bow and arrow goes with Sugriva to Vali's place.

The incidents and their details in this scene differ much from epic to epic. In Valmiki, Hanuman tells Sugriva about Rama and informs that the two brothers want to befriend him. Sguriva agrees and their friendship is confirmed with fire as witness.[33] Then Sugriva relates to Rama his story and that of Vali's taking away his wife and requests him to rid him of his fear of Vali and get back his wife and the kingdom. Rama promises to kill Vali. Sugriva consoles him and assures him to get back Sita. They also speak about Mayavi and the demon Dundubhi. Rama gives proof of his strength by throwing away the skeleton of Dundubhi with the toe of his foot. But Sugriva says that it was too heavy when Vali threw it and at that time Vali himself was dead tired and wants Rama to pierce a sala tree. He sees Rama's arrow piercing not only one sala tree but all the seven with the mountain, entering the underworld and coming back into his quiver.[34] Then they come to Vali's place.

Adhyatma Ramayana generally follows Valmiki, but the element of Godhood in Rama is greatly emphasised. Hanuman goes to Sugriva leaving Rama and Lakshmana under a shady tree and suggests that he befriend them. The same is done with fire as the witness[35] and Sugriva is happy. Lakshmana narrates the events till the abduction of Sita. Sugriva assures Rama to get back Sita to him. Then he places before them Sita's ornaments. Rama puts them to his bosom and begins lamenting. Lakshmana and Sugriva console him. Then Sugriva relates the reason for his stay in that mountain. Rama promises Sugriva to slay his enemy Vali very shortly.[36] Sugriva describes the great prowess of Vali. Rama throws away the bone-heap of giant Dundubhi with his toe and shoots the seven palmirah trees together with the mountain and earth by a single arrow. Sugriva realises that Rama is undoubtedly the God-

32. *Ibid.*, (4-9-9)
33. 'Valmiki Ramayana', (4-5)
34. *Ibid.*, (4-12)
35. 'Adhyatma Ramayana', (4-1-31)
36. *Ibid.*, (4-1-59)

incarnate, and prays for devotion to get rid of the cycle of life and death.[37] Rama grants this. He asks him to challenge Vali. All go to Kishkindha.

Thus we see that the story proper is not too different, but it differs in certain details. The chief points are:

(a) The affirmation of the friendship between Rama and Sugriva with fire as witness is mentioned in Tulasi, Valmiki and Adhyatma but not in Kambar.

(b) In Kambar, Hanuman relates the history of Sugriva but in Tulasi and the two source-epics, Sugriva himself tells his own pathetic story.

(c) In Kambar, when Sugriva feels like having proof of Rama's strength, Hanuman suggests that a sala tree can be shot through by Rama and Sugriva puts it to Rama who pierces all the seven with a single arrow. In Tulasi and the two epics, Sugriva himself wants Rama to try not only the trees but also the mountain-like skeleton of the giant Dundubhi.

(d) In Kambar, Lakshmana throws away the mountain-like skeleton of giant Dundubhi with his toes. In Tulasi and the two Sanskrit epice Rama himself does this.

(e) In Kambar, Sugriva wants Rama to pierce one sala tree and Rama's single arrow pierces seven, as in Valmiki. In Tulasi, it is only stated:

> "Sugriva shows him Dundubbi's bones and the palm trees which Raghunath without any effort hurls away."

as in Adhyatma Ramayana, wherein Sugriva asks Rama to pierce all the seven in a single arrow, which Rama does. Kambar shows not only the extraordinary prowess of Vali but also of Rama.

(f) In Kambar, Hanuman relates the history of Rama and the abduction of Sita to Sugriva, but in Tulasi, it is Lakshmana[38] as in Valmiki[39] and Adhyatma.[40]

37. *Ibid.*, (4-1-85).
38. 'Ram Charit Manas', (4-7-1)
39. 'Valmiki Ramayana', (4-4)
40. 'Adhyatma Ramayana', (4-1-34)

(g) Tulasidas finishes the incidents of Dundubhi's skeleton being thrown and the seven sala trees being pierced in half a chupayi but Kambar devotes one chapter to each of the two incidents.

(h) On proof of Rama's great prowess, Sugriva realises that he is God-incarnate and prays for eternal devotion in Tulasi as in Adhyatma Ramayana. But in Kambar, as in Valmiki, greater friendship is manifested by Sugriva to Rama as God-incarnate.

3. *Death of Vali:*

Kambar: Rama asks Sugriva to challenge Vali for a combat, so that he may stand aside and shoot him to death.[41] Sugriva calls Vali for a fight beating his shoulders which the sleeping Vali hears. With rage he claps. He shouts 'coming, coming,' and comes with fire on his hairs, bitting his teeth and beating his shoulders. His wife Tara tries her best to stop him stating that Sugriva has come with Rama for help,[42] but Vali, confident of his strength, pays no heed to her and states that one who had offered his own kingdom to his younger step-brother would never descend to such a level. Tara dare not advise him further. Vali comes to the side of the mountain. Rama is surprised on seeing him. Lakshmana explains to Rama the mistakes committed by Sugriva[43] in closing the path-hole of Vali and himself becoming the King of Kishkindha in the absence of Vali when he had been to fight the demon Mayavi. Rama, supports Sugriva, and wants to keep up his friendship for ever. Meanwhile, Vali and Sugriva approach each other emitting fire from their eyes and run about here and there roaring, knocking and biting each other and also exchanging hot words. Both are equally matched and neither is defeated. Later, Vali kicks him very severely. Sugriva comes to Rama discouraged, but Rama encourages him to go again for fight with a garland on his neck so as to distinguish the one from the other.[44] Both fight again. Sugriva gives severe kicks to Vali at his life-points. Vali lifts Sugriva to throw him down when Rama sends his unfailing shaft which enters Vali's

41. 'Kamba Ramayanam', (4-7-1)
42. *Ibid.*, (4-7-21)
43. *Ibid.*, (4-7-33)
44. *Ibid.*, (4-7-52)

chest. Vali falls down but holds the shaft before it pierces him through. He wonders whether the person who shot can be one of the three Gods or any other God or person. He takes the shaft out of his body and tries to break it but it vain. There flows a big stream of blood seeing which Sugriva feels greatly distressed, overpowered by brotherly affection, and so 'with scalding tears cascading from his eyes, he falls upon the ground senseless.' Vali sees the name of Rama on the shaft,[45] and derides him, when Rama comes before him. Vali says frowning and reproaching:

> "If he swerves from the right what can we say of the common run of men? Verily he has acted worse than myself."[46]

> Thee son of him who threw away his life
> For honour's sake and truth's; but should'st thou too
> Have seen the light before the Saintly Bharat?
> Thou punishest evil deeds; but do they cease
> To be ill deeds when thou are thyself doer?"[47]

> "Are all the good qualities given
> To thee alone to bring eternal shame
> Uuon the name of Knight, and art thou wise,
> I have heard it said!"[48]

> "I fear thy mind has lost its balance, since
> Thou didst from Jan'ka's swan-like daughter part,
> Who was as life to thee and very soul!"[49]

> "* * * * Where's gone thy tenderness, O man?
> And how have I offended thee? If thou
> Should run thus after infamy, on whom
> Should Glory shed her rays?"[50]

45. *Ibid.*, (4-7-71)
46. *Ibid.*, (4-7-74)
47. *Ibid.*, (4-7-76)
48. *Ibid.*, (4-7-77)
49. *Ibid.*, (4-7-78)
50. *Ibid.*, (4-7-79)

"And who can beat thy glory? For thou gavest
A kingdom to thy brother at Ayodh!
And here in the jungles wild, to balance that
Thou hast my kingdom on my brother here
As gift bestowed!"[51]

"Thou has now thyself shown, O Ram, that power
Can work its will, unjust or just secure:
But say, if thou art right in killing me,
Because thou couldst thy arrow aim unseen,
Canst thou at all the Rakshashas kind accuse
Of carrying off thy spouse by force or guile?"[52]

"When two in duel stand engaged, the just
Regard them both with equal eye: but if
A man is moved towards one and hid behind
A bush, does shoot the other down with sharp
And pointed arrows aiming at the heart,
Is it an act of Dharma?—or something else?"[53]

"It is not valour thou hast shown, or love
Of equality; there is no feud betwixt
Thy house and mine; my body did not press
Thou earth with its intolerable weight; and sure
Thou wouldst not call thy sinful deed a deed
Of mercy: what then was in thy mind, O Ram?"[54]

"If thou didst hanker after an ally
To fight the war against the Rakshas King,
What wisdom led thee turn thy back upon
The tusker roaming fearless o'er the wilds
And kneel thee down before a puny hare?"[55]

51. *Ibid.*, (4-7-81)
52. *Ibid.*, (4-7-82)
53. *Ibid.*, (4-7-83)
54. *Ibid.*, (4-7-84)
55. *Ibid.*, (4-7-86)

"It is the moon alone that had a spot
Till now upon her face: the sun remained
A stainless globe of light. But thou hast ta'en
Thy birth in his thrice glorious house and lo,
He heats the moon in the blackness of his spot."[56]

"Are not ashamed to show thy face as man
And warrior, who hast laid a trap for me,
And lying concealed behind abush, hast aimed
A mortal dart against my chest, when I
But came to meet a foe that challenged me?"[57]

"Thy conduct gives the lie to the learning which
They saw thou doest possess: thy deed has brought
Disgrace upon thy great forbears! Form Man!
Thou hast not killed Vali but hast destroyed
The fence that shields the seedling Dharm from ill!"[58]

"O fie on thee! A foe has carried off
Thy spouse, while on thy idle shoulder lies
That bow mocking the valour. Is't only good
In unfair fight concealed for shooting down
An unarmed foe?"[59]

Rama hears all these reproaches unperturbed and justifies the action of Sugriva who accepted the throne only on the advice of his councillors. He questions Vali why he got angry with his younger brother and tries to kill him having taken possession of his wife—an unexcusable crime. Finally Rama says that as Sugriva came to him for protection as a lifelfriend, he had shot him dead, adding:

"It is my ever-pressing vow to help
Th' oppressed, the poor and those forlorn."[60]

56. *Ibid.*, (4-7-87)
57. *Ibid.*, (4-7-88)
58. *Ibid.*, (4-7-89)
59. *Ibid.*, (4-7-90)
60. *Ibid.*, (4-7-102)

Vali is not satisfied and defends himself by saying:

> "Brahma, O Sire, has not ordained for us Vanaras the same laws of marriage that he has established for you men, amongst whom the chastity of women is a most cherished possession. He has made us to mate as we please. There is no marriage amongst us, nor conduct based on the Vedas, but what comes out of our own inclination of the moment. Where then have I offended against Dharma, O Rāma?"[61]

Rama dissatisfied with his argument says repudiating that after all he is the son of Indra, the King of Gods and can distinguish right from wrong though in a monkey's form, and substantiates by citing the examples of the Elephant and Jatayu to prove that 'it is not the body but the mind that rules the moral life.' He ends by saying:

> "Hast thou not shown by words that have e'en now
> Fall'n from thy mouth, that there is not a truth
> In all the moral codes that thou ignors't?
> If one cannot the right from wrong discern,
> He is a brute though bearing human form."[62]

Vali has practically no counter argument to offer, but still has a doubt about the action of Rama and enquires why he shot him 'concealed behind a bush like a base and cruel hunter shooting down a beast?'[63] Now Rama is silent. Lakshmana comes forward with the answer that when Sugriva came seeking for protection under Rama, he gave word to slay his enemy and added:

> "He feared that thou too, should he show his face
> To thee, might haply wish to save thyself
> And fall a suppliant at his feet; and so
> It is that he concealed himself to aim
> His dart at thee."[64]

61. *Ibid.*, (4-7-104, 105)
62. *Ibid.*, (4-7-112)
63. *Ibid.*, (4-7-116)
64. *Ibid.*, (4-7-117)

Now Vali has nothing to say but to bow to Rama recognising him as the Lord of Heaven and earth and requests him to excuse his faults. Wisdom dawns on him and he sees 'the Three in Rama, all in Rama and Rama in all.'[65] He feels happy to have had an end by the dart of one whose name is the sole power to even Shiva.[66] He sings the glory of Rama saying that all his sins are burnt away. He expresses his gratefulness to Sugriva by saying:

"Is there a better good that brother can
To brother do? Sugriva has brought thee here
To kill me with thy dart, which straight does take
Me to the realms of heaven, leaving him
The tasteless, empty crown of an earthly realm."[67]

Vali goes to the extent of requesting Rama with folded hands to excuse the mistakes of Sugriva, if any, committed in future due to drink,[68] and see that his three younger brothers do not look down upon Sugriva for having got his own brother killed.[69] He feels sorry for not giving him a chance to bring Ravana tied by his tail and show his monkey tricks.[70] Pointing to Hanuman he says that he will fulfil the tasks which may be impossible for others. He wants Rama to look at him as his ready bent bow in hand, and treat Sugriva as his own brother.[71] Then he stretches his hands to Sugriva and clasping his hands asks him not to feel sorry for his death.[72] He wants Sugriva to understand that Rama is God incornate, and asks him to 'obey every one of his commands implicitly to attain eternal life.'[73] He then requests Rama with folded hands to take charge of Sugriva and all his people. Thereafter, he calls for his son Angada through Sugriva. Angada comes, falls on his father seeing him drenched in blood and bemoans his extraordinary pro-

65. *Ibid.*, (4-7-121)
66. *Ibid.*, (4-1-123)
67. *Ibid.*, (4-7-126)
68. *Ibid.*, (4-7-127)
69. *Ibid.*, (4-7-128)
70. *Ibid.*, (4-7-129)
71. *Ibid.*, (4-7-130)
72. *Ibid.*, (4-7-131)
73. *Ibid.*, (4-7-136)

wess in trying down Ravana by his tail, his churning the ocean of milk and his devout worship at the feet of Shiva.[74] Vali embraces him, and says that what Rama has done to him is a blessing in disguise, for Rama is God himself in flesh and blood. He advises him saying:

> "Think not ever that he has wrought my death, but work for thy salvation by serving Him and if he has wars to wage, aid him with all thy might and fight his battles for him."[75]

So saying Vali embraces him again and tells Rama:

> "Behold this only child of mine, O Lord!
> He loveth Dharma but is a consuming fire
> To the stubble called the black-skinned Rakshas race
> I leave him to thy tender care, O Ram."[76]

Angada then falls at the feet of Rama and he, as an insignia of his acceptance of Angada, gives him his sword, seeing which the soul of Vali happily leaves his body, his hand slips off from the arrow which comes out of the back of Vali, has a bath in the sea and goes back into the quiver of Rama.[77]

Tulasi: Having secured Rama, Sugriva goes roaring, hearing which Vali starts to attack. His wife advises him that the two persons whose help Sugriva has got, are Rama and Lakshmana who can win even the death itself in fight.[78] But Vali says:

> "My timid and beloved wife! Raghunath looks with impartial eyes on all. If per change he slays me I shall have found my Lord."[79]

He marches on with great pride thinking very poorly of Sugriva. Both fight. vali knocks him roaring, and Sugriva runs off in dismay getting a severe hit and tells Rama that Vali is death himself. See-

74. *Ibid.*, (4-7-143 to 145)
75. *Ibid.*, (4-7-149)
76. *Ibid.*, (4-7-151)
77. *Ibid.*, (4-7-153)
78. 'Ram Charit Manas', (4-9-14-15)
79. *Ibid.*, (4-9)

ing that the two fighters have similar forms, Rama abstains from shooting. Rama touches him thereby making his body hard as a thunderbolt. He feels no more pain. Then he puts a garland on his neck and sends him back to fight, himself watching from behind a tree.[80] When Sugriva gets tired, Rama shoots an arrow at the chest of Vali.[81] Vali falls down instantaneously, but gets up and sees the Lord standing in front again and again, and recognises the Lord with joy at the succesful conclusion of his life. Still he says:

> "You have come down from heaven, holy lord, to further righteousness and yet you have shot me like some huntsman! Am I your enemy and Sugriva your friend? For what fault, Lord, have you slain me?"[82]

Rama replies:

> "Listen, poor fool, a younger brother's wife, a sister, the wife of a son and virgin maid are all alike; if any looks on these with a lustful eye, in the slaying of him there is no sin. Fool! So boundless is your arrogance that you would not lend your ear to your wife's warning; and though you knew Sugriva was protected by my strong arm, you sought in your insolent pride to kill him!"[83]

Vali has no answer to offer except to seek shelter under him in his last hours. Rama, now touching his head, says:

"I restore your body to health and soundness; remain alive."[84] Vali only sings the glory of Rama and his name saying that it is difficult even for sages to utter his name at the time of their end. He adds:

> "That Rama by the power of whose name Shankara at Kasi bestows on all alike the gift of immortal life has come in visible form before his eyes."[85]

80. *Ibid.*, (4-10-4)
81. *Ibid.*, (4-10)
82. *Ibid.*, (4-11-3)
83. *Ibid.*, (4-11-4, 5)
84. *Ibid.*, (4-12-1)
85. *Ibid.*, (4-12-2, 3)

and that such a happy chance may not recur. He requests for himself such a birth which may have love at his feet, and also that his son Angada who is reverent and strong like himself, may be received and helped making him his own servant.[86] With immense devotion at the feet of Rama, Vali leaves his body. Rama sends him to his own world.

In this scene, the story is similar in all epics. In the presentation of arguments and counter arguments between Rama and Vali the epics differ. In Valmiki, Vali's wife does not advise him before the first fight, but only before leaving for the second and final fight. After the first fight, Sugriva flies far far away into the forest. When Rama reaches him, Sugriva expresses his great disappointment to Rama saying:

"Thy matchless strength I first beheld,
And dared my foe by thee impelled:
Why hast thou tried me with deceit
And wifed me to a sure defeat?
Thou shouldst have said 'I will not slay
Thy foeman in the coming fray'.
For had I then thy purpose known

However, he goes again with the garland put by Lakshmana to distinguish him from Vali as per the advice of Rama. Meanwhile Tara, the wife of Vali, tries to stop him with her advice, but in vain. The fight between the two is not so elaborate as in Kambar, nor is there any struggle between the shaft of Rama and Vali. Lakshmana does not tell Rama about the wrongs done by Sugriva before the start of the fight. Sugriva does not swoon seeing Vali drenched in his own blood and dying. Some of Vali's arguments are the same as in Kambar. In Valmiki, the order is not very logical. Rama, to Valmiki, is no more than a great king and as such 'has not hesitated to put specious arguments and cruel and unfeeling expressions in the mouth of Rama, when replying to the invectives of Vali'.[88] In

86. *Ibid.*, (4-12-Chand No. 2)
87. Translation by Griffth.
88. "Kamba Ramayanam - A Study' — V. V. S. Aiyar, p. 187.

the forest, Rama is only a deputy and a royal ward of Bharata and has no freedom but to obey his king.[89] 'Vali is no more than a monkey and lacks tenderness and truth and is unworthy of the character of Rama.[90] Tara hears of Vali's condition, and starts immediately with Angada to meet her dying husband. She abuses Sugriva for joining Rama to kill Vali. Now the monkeys advise her to get Angada crowned,[91] and thus save him from Sugriva who was avaricious, and an old enemy. She runs to see her husband and cries bitterly. Hanuman consoles her. Then Vali asks Sugriva to take for himself his golden garland, and so does Sugriva. Now Vali entrusts to Rama the responsibility of Angada and asks Angada to follow the words of Tara.[92] Neela takes out the arrow. Sugriva laments and feels like retiring to the forest or entering fire. Tara requests Rama to kill her also, with the same arrow, for Vali cannot be happy without her, and will not be able to stay in heaven.[93] Rama consoles Tara, Sugriva and Angada.

In Adhyatma Ramayana, the scene is rather short. Vali comes hearing the roaring of Sugriva and the fight commences. After this fight, Sugriva comes back to Rama and Vali goes home. Sugriva finds fault with Rama and asks whether in truth he did not want him to die at the hands of Vali.[94] Rama explains the exact resemblance of the two to each other and sends him back asking Lakshmana to put a garland round his neck. Lakshmana garlands him.[95] Tara stops Vali saying that Angada has told her that the persons helping Sugriva are Rama and Lakshmana, and requests him to receive Sugriva and take shelter under Rama, thereby save Angada and family. So saying, Tara falls at his feet weeping.[96] Vali only pities her feminine quality and tells her of God's incarnation in the form of Rama, adding that he will either bring

89. *Ibid*., pp. 191-192
90. *Ibid*., p. 192
91. 'Valmiki Ramayana', (4-19)
92. *Ibid*., (4-22)
93. *Ibid*, (4-24)
94. 'Adhyatma Ramayana', (4-2-11)
95. *Ibid*., (4-2-17)
96. *Ibid*., (4-2-32)

Rama home or kill Sugriva in a second if he is alone. [97] So saying, he goes again and engages himself in the fight when Rama standing hidden behind a tree [98] shoots at his chest. Seeing Rama, he asks him in a taunting tone the reason for killing him under cover, specially when the flesh of a monkey is not worth eating. He says that he would have brought Sita with Lanka itself with Ravana and his people bound in a few moments. Rama explains to him that immorality could never be tolerated, that daughter, sister, younger brother's wife, and daughter-in-law are equal to one another and any one committing adultery with any of them is a great sinner and should be killed by the king and hence his action. Vali gets frightened, knowing Rama as Sri Narayana Himself and begs for forgiveness and requests him to take care of Angada. Rama touches his chest and takes the arrow out as requested by Vali, and he gets the heavenly form and enters supreme heaven.

In this scene, treatment differs from epic to epic, and not the story as such. Some features are noteworthy :

(a) In Kambar and Tulasi, we find Tara advising Vali to refrain from the fight with Sugriva before the first fight, whereas in Valmiki and Adhyatma Ramayana, Tara's advice is before the second.

(b) In Kambar, Lakshmana points out to Rama the wrongs done to Sugriva before the fight commences.

(c) In Kambar and Tulasi, after the first fight Sugriva does not vehemently accuse Rama of letting him down, as in the two source works.

(d) The interval between the first and the second fights in Kambar and Tulasi is very short. In the other two epics, particularly in Valmiki, it is very long.

97. *Ibid.*, (4-2-38)
98. *Ibid.*, (4-2-45)

(e) In Tulasi as in Adhyama Ramayana, Tara tells Vali that Rama is God-incarnate, and requests him to desist from the fight, but in Kambar as in Valmiki, Tara does not say so. However after the shot Vali imagines that Rama may be one of the three Gods.

(f) In Valmiki and Adhyatma Ramayanas, Lakshmana garlands Sugriva on Rama's direction, before he goes for the second fight. In Kambar and Tulasi, the name of Lakshmana is not stated. Rama garlands Sugriva in Tulasi.

(g) In Kambar, Rama's arrow does not come out on the other side of the chest, but Vali catches it and tries to break it. He recognises the shaft as Rama's. It does not come out in Valmiki and Adhyatma also. In Tulasi it goes out.

(h) The brotherly affection of Sugriva for his blood brother Vali is detailed only in Valmiki and Kambar.

(i) The dialogue between Vali and Rama, their arguments and counter-arguments, differ in quality and length from epic to epic.

(j) In Kambar, the answer to Vali's final question about Rama's killing him hiding, is given by Lakshmana while Rama keeps silent. V. V. S. Iyer says that 'by making Lakshmana reply to Vali's question, Kambar has saved Rama from the dilemma of either speaking an untruth or admitting a limitation to his powers.'[100]

(k) In Kambar, Vali requests Rama to see that his three brothers do not look down upon Sugriva for taking Rama's help, a third person, and requests him to treat him as his own brother. He similarly advises Sugriva also. "By this one little stroke", says V. V. S. Iyer "Kambar has to a large extent redeemed the blackness of Sugriva's treachery to his brother."[101]

99. *Ibid.*, (4-2-70)

100. 'Kamba Ramayanam - A Study' — V. V. S. Aiyar, p. 192.

101. 'Kamba Ramayanam - A Study' — V. V. S. Aiyar, p. 191.

(l) In Kambar, Vali mentions the great prowess of Hanuman and says that he will fulfil the task of finding out Sita which may be impossible to others. Vali puts it to Rama that Hanuman will serve as a ready bent bow in hand.

(m) The lament of Angada extolling the great prowess of his father is described only in Kambar.

(n) The arrival of Tara on the scene is after the death of Vali in Kambar, Tulasi and also in Adhyatma Ramayana as against Valmiki.

(o) In Kambar, Vali sends for Angada through Sugriva and entrusts him to Rama for protection and Rama signifies his assent by handing over his own sword to Angada, whereafter Vali peacefully leaves his body.

(p) In Kambar, the arrow comes out only after the long- dialogue and goes a long way to come back into the quiver of Rama In Valmiki, Neela takes it out at the end and in Adhyatma Ramayana the shaft is stretched out by Rama himself.

(q) The effect of the divine touch of Rama on Sugriva and Vali is mentioned only in Tulasi, and on Vali in Adhyatma.

(r) In Kambar, Tulasi and Adhyatma Ramayanas, Rama does not speak about the King Bharata and that his regime should be kept righteous by him as loyal and royal deputy and 'executor of his orders.'

(s) Only in Valmiki, Vali offers his garlend to Sugriva and asks him to follow the advice of Tara and keep Angada under his kind care.

(t) The struggle between Vali and Rama's arrow is a piece of originality in Kambar. In the words of V. V. S. Iyer, "the struggle of Vali with the arrow, in Kamban is one of the finest word-paintings ever printed in literature of sheer physical force and might. And note his art which by delaying the appearance of

Rama sharpens the curiosity of the reader as to what Vali will say to him when he sees him, while at the same time delighting the reader to the full with his majestic, slow moving cinematograph like picture of Vali's struggle with Rama's dart......Valmiki interposes no action between Vali's fall and Rama's appearance and satisfies himself merely with a description of the ornaments and physical appearance of the great Vanara."[102]

In Tulasi, as soon as the arrow hits Vali, he falls down and immediately sees Rama before him, as in Adhyatma Ramayana.

(u) "Vali's defence of his conduct with regard to his brother's wife, and Rama's reply thereto are Kambar's contribution to the story. Rama's reply is grandly conceived. In his allusion to Jatayu, the poet gives us an equisite blend."

(v) Only in Kambar, Vali 'looks upon Sugriva as one who helped him to attain salvation.'

4. Sugriva Crowned:

Kambar: Hearing the death of Vali, Tara runs and rolls on him crying with dishevalled locks of hair. She blames the God of death at his ingratitude for taking away the life of Vali who produced nectar by the churning of the sea of milk and distributed the same to all the gods without himself taking a drop of it.[103] She is at a loss to know of any wrong committed by him, while she knows of his deep devotion to Shiva. She says that if she was really in her husband's heart, the arrow of his enemy should have killed her as well, and that if he was really in her heart, he should have been alive like herself.[104] She finally takes refuge under 'Fate'. Hanuman consoles her, sends her inside and attends to the cremation of Vali.

Rama then asks Lakshmana to celebrate Sugriva's coronation. Lakshmana asks Hanuman to arrange for the necessary things. The

102. 'Kamba Ramayanam - A Study' — V. V. S. Aiyar, p. 190
103. 'Kamba Ramayanam', (4-8-6)
104. *Ibid*., (4-8-10)

Coronation takes place in proper order. Sugriva pays his reverences to Rama. Rama advises him to lead a high righteous life, explaining to him the proper mode of administration. He specially asks him not to despise the disabled persons and cites his own example of coming to grief by shooting mud-balls on hunchbacked Manthara.[105] Rama at the end asks him to get ready with his army of monkeys for the search of Sita after the rainy season.

Sugriva requests Rama to live in Kishkinda itself but Rama rejects the suggestion stating the implications of the boons. A period of four months is given to Sugriva to make preliminary arrangements for the search of Sita. Rama gives necessary advice to Angada and asks Hanuman to go with Sugriva though he desires to remain with Rama and serve him.[106] Rama and Lakshmana go to Maliya forest to spend the rainy season. Sugriva commences his regime.

Tulasi: Hearing of Vali's death, Tara comes crying with dishevelled locks of hair. Rama seeing her so distraught explains to her the reality behind things and bestows wisdom on her dispelling her delusion, saying :

> "Earth, water, fire, ether and air — of these five elements is this Vile body composed. There, before your eyes, lies that body asleep, but the soul is undying; for whom, then, do you weep?"[107]

Light dawns in her, and she falls at the feet of Rama praying for eternal devotion. Then the cremation of the dead Vali takes place, whereafter, Rama asks Lakshmana to crown Sugriva and the same is done ceremoniously instaling Angada as crown Prince. Rama gives advice to Surgriva on various matters. Then Rama states that he will not be entering any city for fourteen years, but live in a hut in the forest nearby till the forthcoming rainy season is over. He desires that he should reign with the help of Angada always remembering the task ahead. Sugriva returns home. Rama leaves

105. *Ibid.*, (4-9-11)
106. *Ibid*, (4-9-27)
107. 'Ram Charit Manas', (4-13-2, 3)

for the Pravarshana mountain where the gods have already reserved a beautiful cave in the forest full of fruits, roots and leaves. Rama and Lakshmana spend the winter there, the elder expatiating on the greatness of saints, describing the beauties of nature and giving advice to the younger.

Here the story of the scene is the same in all the four epics but for minor details. In Valmiki, it is Lakshmana who tells Sugriva to have the funeral of Vali performed. Sugriva, Hanuman and other ministers request Rama to go to Kishkindha. Rama explains his inability to do so and asks them to be ready for the search of Sita after the four months of the rainy season. Here Sugriva is crowned by his own people at Kishkindha.

In Adhyatma Ramayana also, Tara comes only after the death of Vali. Her councillors advise her to get Angada crowned immediately as king in the place of Vali.[108] She comes and seeing her dead husband, asks Rama to shoot her with the same arrow. Rama explain to her the nature of elements, consoles her philosophically and advises her to take to contemplation of his own form day and night to be relieved of all troubles and achieve salvation. Wisdom dawns upon Tara and also in Sugriva. Rama asks Sugriva to perform the funeral and the same is done. Sugriva requests Rama to occupy the throne but after hearing from Rama that he has to be in exile, he goes to Kishkindha and has his coronatoin celebrated. Rama with Lakshmana goes to the Pravarshana mountain and spends the rainy season. Rama explains to his brother the principles of 'Kriyayoga, and other such matters.

The salient points here are:

(a) Tara comes to the scene only after the death of Vali in Kambar and Tulasi, as against Valmiki and Adhyatma.

(b) Only in Valmiki and Adhyatma Ramayanas, the councillors of Tara advise her to crown Angada immediately in the place of Vali on hearing about his death. Kambar and Tulasidas have not mentioned this version.

108. 'Adhyatma Ramayana', (4-3). This advice is found in Valmiki Ramayanam also (4-19).

(c) In Kambar, Rama does not console Tara on her husband's death as in Tulasi. In Valmiki and Adhyatma Ramayanas, Rama consoles her explaining the philosophy of life. In Kambar, Hanuman consoles her.

(d) In Kambar and Tulasidas, Tara does not request Rama to kill her with the same shaft which killed Vali, as in Valmiki and Adhyatma Ramayanas.

(e) Only in Tulasi and Adhyatma Ramayanas, wisdom dawns on Tara on Rama's advice, and not in Kambar and Valmiki.

(f) In Valmiki, Rama asks Sugriva to go to Kishkindha and have himself crowned by his people whereas in Kambar, Tulasi and also in Adhyatma Ramayanas, it is Lakshmana who is asked by Rama to crown Sugriva and hence Lakshmana is present at the coronation of Sugriva in these three epics.

(g) Only in Kamba Rama advises Surgriva after his coronation not to neglect any person, however small he be, citing his own example in aiming mud-balls on the hunch-back of Manthara.

(h) Only in Kambar, Hanuman volunteers his services to Rama for the period of the four months in Prashravana mountain.

(i) Only in Tulasi, a beautiful cave in Prashavana mountain, is arranged of Rama and Lakshmana.

(j) In Kambar and Tulasi, Sugriva and his people make no request to Rama to accept the Kingdom of Kishkindha as in Valmiki and Adhyatma.

5. *Lakshmana's wrath and Tara*:

Kambar: Finding Sugriva immersed in his royal pleasures entrusting the reigns of government in the hands of ministers and forgetting the promise made by him, Rama becomes angry. He sends Lakshmana to Sugriva stating that the same arrow which sent evil persons and even Vali to death, is still with him. He asks him to remind Sugriva calmly of the action to be taken by him for the

search.[109] Lakshmana goes hurriedly to Kishkindha. The monkeys are frightened and go to Angada who, in turn, seeing Lakshmana in extreme wrath, passes on the information to Sugriva who was lying deep drunk in pleasures. But Sugriva pays no heed. Then Angada with Hanuman goes to Tara, informs her about the arrival of Lakshmana in rage. Tara rebukes them for their thanklessness and blames them for forgetting their promise to Rama. By this time many monkeys come in and close the big gates of Kishkindha. Lakshmana breaks open the gate with anger and the monkeys run away scattered. Lakshmana enters Kishkindha. Angada and others seek the advice of Tara and Hanuman suggests that if Tara herself goes and stops Lakshmana from entering the Palace gate, the righteous Lakshmana may state the object of his coming. [110] Tara accordingly goes to the palace gate with her pretty maidens and stops Lakshmana.[111] Lakshmana feels shy even to see them. Tara states that they are blessed by his arrival and enquires about the purpose of his visit.[112] Lakshmana on seeing Tara, recollects the widohood of his mothers, and his eyes brim with tears.[113] Then he tells her the purpose of his coming. Tara diplomatically replies that orders have already been given to collect the monkeys and requests him to excuse the delay. Lakshmana calms down, Hanuman says that they will never forget the good done by Rama and takes him to Sugriva. Angada informs Sugriva about Lakshmana's arrival. Sugriva repents his mistakes and the seeming ingratitude and promises never to touch liquor thereafter.[114] Then he sends Angada to bring Lakshmana and gets ready. Lakshmana becomes angry but suppresses it.[115] Both embrace each other and go to the palace. Sugriva then requests Lakshmana to have a bath and food but Lakshmana declines and says that if he showed Sita, it will be equivalent to giving a bath in sacred water and a drink of nectar.[116] Lakshama asks Sugriva to take action immediately. Sugriva feels sorry. He asks Hanuman to bring his army and goes with Lakshmana and meets Rama and re-

109. 'Kamba Ramayanam', (4-11-8)
110. *Ibid.*, (4-11-45)
111. *Ibid.*, (4-11-42)
112. *Ibid.*, (4-11-49, 50)
113. *Ibid*, (4-11-52)
114. *Ibid.*, (4-11-97)
115. *Ibid*, (4-11-105)
116. *Ibid.*, (4-11-113)

grets the delay. Rama asks about Hanuman. Sugriva says that he will be coming shortly with the army. Rama sends Sugriva and Angada to come back with the army. Rama spends that night with Lakshmana thinking of Sita the whole night.[117]

Tulasi: Though the winter season was over, there is no information about Sita, and Rama is greatly worried and tells Lakshmana:

> "If I could once hear tidings of her, however, it might be, I should bring her back in a moment, though I should have to conquer Death himself. Wherever she may be, if she be still alive, brother, I shall strive to rescue her and bring her back."

Then he continues:

> "Now that Sugriva is enjoying sovereignty and riches, the life in a city and a wife, he has quite forgotten me. Tomorrow I shall slay the fool with the same arrow with which I killed Vali."[118]

Lakshmana gets immensely wild and Rama instructs him saying:

"Only threaten our friend Sugriva, brother and bring him here."[119]

Hanuman realising Sugriva's forgetfulness, reminds him of the duty ahead.[120] Sugriva is frightened and sends his messengers all around to trace Sita in fifteen days. Hanuman sends them with due honour and advice. Lakshmana comes with anger. The monkeys run scattered. Lakshmana cries stringing the bow:

"I shall burn the city to ashes."[121]

The town is confounded. Angada comes. Sugriva afraid and asks Hanuman to go with Tara 'and placate the prince with humble

117. *Ibid.*, (4-11-138)
118. 'Ram Charit Manas,' (4-21-3)
119. *Ibid.*, (4-21)
120. *Ibid.*, (4-22-1)
121. *Ibid.*, (4-22)

apologies'.[122] Hanuman accordingly goes with Tara and brings Lakshmana to the palace with respect and honour. Sugriva bows at his feet and Lakshmana embraces him. Sugriva regrets—

> "There is nought that intoxicates like luxury; in one moment it bemuses the soul of a sage."[123]

Lakshmana feels pleased with his apologies. Hanuman reports the action taken. Sugriva, Angada and other monkeys, go with Lakshmana to Rama. Sugriva apologices for his inaction drowned in pleasures and speaks highly of his grace as greater than any other means of devotion, penance etc. Rama smiles and says:

"You are as dear to me, my brother, as Bharata"[124] and asks him to do the needful to get back Sita.

The story is very simple and similar in all the four epics but for the characterisation of Tara and other minor details. In Valmiki, Tara lives with Sugriva as wife even after the death of Vali.[125] Hanuman goes to Sugriva and reminds him of the duty awaiting him for his friend Rama and to fulfil his promise by searching for Sita. Sugriva is pleased with the timely advice and orders Neela to bring in all his army of monkeys for the search of Sita. He directs that information should reach him in fifteen days on pain of capital punishment. Rama is furious and asks Lakshmana to tell Sugriva that he will have to follow Vali if he fails in his duty and promise. Seeing Lakshmana's rage Rama asks him to 'follow a policy of appeasement and persuasion'. Lakshmana goes to Kishkindha and asks Angada to inform Sugriva of his arrival forthwith. Sugriva hears of the fury of Lakshmana, and is at a loss to understand his mistake. Hanuman tells Sugriva of his indulgence in worldly pleasures and the feeling of Rama. Lakshmana sees the luxurious life of Sugriva. Sugriva requests Tara to appeal to Lakshmana and calm down his angger. She does so and appeals stating that monkeys should not be judged by the standards of men, when even sages fall a victim to senses.[126] Lakshmana's eyes look down seeing her and

122. *Ibid*, (4-2-2)
123. *Ibid*, (4-23-4)
124. *Ibid*, (4-24-4)
125. 'Valmiki Ramayana', (4-29)
126. *Ibid*., (4-33)

his anger is also softened. Tara has no sense of shame being drunk. She asks him whether anybody is not obeying his orders. Lakshmana tells her that she will always side her people, and blames Sugriva for his delay and not behaving as a true friend. Tara appeals to him not to get so angry and forgive Sugriva and his people, specially because monkeys are by nature mischievous and moreover he is a king. Lakshmana enters the palace of Sugriva and sees him in great pomp and splendour like Indra amidst damsels. Lakshmana again grows furious. Sugriva is frightened. Lakshmana angrily tells him that he will have to follow Vali forthwith, for that path is not yet closed,[127] and asks him to stand by his promise. Tara again intervenes and mentions about the action already taken. She adds that only by Rama's grace Sugriva has got fame, eternal kingdom, herself and Ruma his wife.[128] She begs for pardon. Sugriva also says that search has already been started and requests him to excuse his faults, if any. They go to Rama. Collecting all the monkeys through Hanuman, Sugriva goes in a very bright and decorated palanquin. Rama feels happy to see him with his monkeys. Rama asks him to consult his cuncillors about the action taken for tracing Sita. Sugriva explains the greatness of his persons and assures him of success. Rama feels confident that he will, in the near future, kill Ravana.

In the Adhyatma Ramayana also we find some minor changes. Tara lives with Sugriva. Hanuman tells Sugriva of the great good done by Rama in getting back the kingdom, his wife and also Tara[129] and reminds him of his duty and promise. Sugriva feels happy for the timely advise and asks him to send ten thousand monkeys to all directions to get news about Sita in a fortnight threatening that, should any body return after that period without the news he will be killed by him. Hanuman communicates this order to others. Rama is angry thinking of the luxury of Sugriva in wine and women and sends Lakshmana to tell him that he and his people will get the same fate of Vali, if action is not taken forthwith. Lakshmana goes to Kishkindha with rage. Angada pascifies him, immediately informs Sugriva who sends Hanuman with Angada to bring Lakshma to the palace, and tells Tara to pacify Lakshmana. Hanuman receives Lakshmana cordially.

127. *Ibid.*, (4-34)
128. *Ibid.*, (4-35)
129. 'Adhyatma Ramayana', (4-4-46)

Tara, decorated with ornaments and with intoxicating eyes receives him smiling, and states that action had already been taken. She requests him to meet Sugriva and take him to Rama. Lakshmana is pacified. He however sees Sugriva lying with Ruma in embrance.[130] Seeing Lakshmana, he jumps out frightened. With great fury Lakshmana tells him that the same arrow which killed Vali is now awaiting him.[131] Hanuman says that Sugriva is a greater devotee of Rama than Lakshmana himself[132] and that action has already been taken. Sugriva becomes submissive. Lakshmana requests him to excuse him for his hot words.[133] Then both with Neela, Angada and Hanuman and other important monkeys go to Rama in a well decorated palanquin. Sugriva reports the action already taken and shows Rama the huge army of monkeys all born of gods.[134] They can change forms at will and are experts in fighting, some with the strength of ten-thousand elephants and some with unlimited strength. He introduces his ministers and commanders of great personal valour. Rama sheds tears of joy and asks him to send persons for the search of Sita.

The following are the noteworthy features:

(a) In Kambar and Tulasi, Tara is not living with Sugriva as his concubine.

(b) In Kambar alone, Tara is an ideal widow after the death of Vali, and when Lakshmana sees her and her attire, he is immediatley reminded of his mothers and their widowhood.

(c) In Kambar, Angada sees Lakshmana coming, goes to Sugriva and finding him immersed in luxury turns to Hanuman, and both go to Tara, the wodowed mother for advice. She blames them for their forgetfulness in their duty to one who helped them immensely. On Lakshmana breaking open the main city gate, they go to Tara for a second time. In Tulasi, Angada directly goes to Lakshmana and Sugriva asks Hanuman to go with Tara and pacify Lakshmana. Tulasidas has followed Valmiki and Adhyatma Ramayanas.

130. *Ibid.*, (4-5-50)
131. *Ibid*, (4-5-52)
132. *Ibid.*, (4-5-54)
133. *Ibid.*, (4-5-60)
134. *Ibid.*, (4-6-7)

(d) In Kambar, Hanuman suggests that Tara should pacify Lakshmana. In Tulasi, Suriva asks Hanuman to go with Tara. In Valmiki and Adhyatma Ramayanas, Sugriva asks Tara direct to go to Lakshmana.

(e) Only in Kambar, seeing Tara and her maidens, Lakshmana feels shy and thinks of his widowed mothers.

(f) Only in Kambar, Sugriva repents greatly for his forgetfulness due to wine and women, and takes a pledge not to touch liquor thereafter.

(g) Only in Kambar, Sugriva requests Lakshmana to have food, but Lakshmana rejects.

(h) In Kambar, Sugriva asks Hanuman to come with the forces, and himself goes to Rama with Lakshmana and the members of his family, whereas in Tulasi, Sugriva goes to Rama with all the other monkeys, and no mention is made about the members of his family. Tulasidas has generally followed Valmiki. In Adhyatma Ramayana, Sugriva goes with Lakshmana, Neela, Angada, Hanuman and other important monkeys in a well decorated palanquin.

(i) In Kambar, no action for the search of Sita is taken either by Sugriva or Hanuman until Sugriva apologises to Rama. However Tara tells Lakshmana that orders have already been given to the monkeys to search for Sita. In Tulasi, Hanuman regrets the forgetfulness of Sugriva and reminds him and he immediately sends his messengers giving fifteen days time as in Valmiki and Adhyatma Ramayanas where Lakshmana regrets use of hot words.

(j) In Valmiki, Tara has no sense of shame and is drunk. She justifies the luxurious life of Sugriva being a monkey. In Adhyatma too, she is drunk. In Kambar and Tulasidas she is not drunk.

(k) Only in Adhyatma Ramayana, Hanuman tells Lakshmana that Sugriva is a greater devote of Rama than Lakshmana himself, and Sugriva later tells Rama that the monkeys are born of gods with immeasurable strength and powers.

6. *Hanuman Starts with the Ring:*

Kambar: The big army under their commanders assembles before Sugriva and he brings Rama to the top of a hill to see the same spread like ocean. Rama and Lakshmana feel confident of success. Rama asks Sugriva to initiate the search. Sugriva orders the monkeys to go in different directions, and asks Hanuman, Angada, Jambavan and a few others to go Southwards,[135] advising them to specially search in certain places and return in a month's time. He advises them among other things, to go to the ancient abode of Agastya[136] in Dandaka forest, Tiruvengadam (the modern Tirumalai-Tirupati) which is the land mark for Sanskrit and Tamil,[137] cautioning them not to go into it lest their sins should be washed out and they forget the immediate duty.[138] He asks them to pay tribute to the Tamil Sage by going round the Podia Hills, the residence of Agastya presiding over the Tamil Sangam (and cautioning them not to get into it lest they should get immersed in it),[139] the Porunai river and the Mahendra mountain before crossing the sea. Rama gives Hanuman a vivid picture of every limb of Sita and asks him to tell Sita of—

(a) the first prematrimonial sight,

(b) her statement that if the youth who accompanied sage Vishwamitra is not the person who broke the bow of Shiva, she will die,

(c) his seeing her in full decoration at the palace of Janaka for the first time,

(d) his words to her on the exile not to accompany him, for she may create trouble instead of pleasure,

(e) her answer to him that all other things but herself would thereafter please him and

135. 'Kamba Ramayanam', (4-13-7)
136. *Ibid.*, (4-13-17)
137. *Ibid.*, (4-13-26)
138. *Ibid.*, (4-13-29)
139. *Ibid.*, (4-13-31)

(f) her enquiry after travelling a little into the stony forest about the distance yet to be walked before reaching the forest, showing thereby the extreme tiresomeness of her tender body.[140] Then Rama gives his diamond ring to Hanuman wishing him success in his mission.[141] Hanuman starts, followed by Angada, Jambavan and others towards the South.

Tulasi: There come multitudes of monkeys of every colour, every one enquiring about the welfare of Rama. Sugriva bids all go and search for Sita. He gives them one month's time and adds:

> "If any one of you comes back after that period without tidings, I shall have him put to death."[142]

All the monkeys leave for the search immediately. Then he calls for Neela, Angada, Hanuman and the wise Jambavan and asks them to go searching southwards contemplating on Rama. They start thinking of Rama. Rama calls Hanuman near, touches his head, gives his ring in his hand and taking him in confidence tells him:

> "Do all you can to comfort Sita. Tell her of my might and the love I bear her in her absence and return with all speed."[143]

This action of Rama makes Hanuman feel that his life is blessed and starts with the Lord in heart.

In Valmiki Ramayana, Sugriva sends the monkeys for the search and then he asks Neela, Hanuman and Jambuvan to go to south with Angada as their leader. He tells them of the path in detail from Vindhyachala mountains, Godavari, Mahanadi, Krishna rivers to Andhra, Chola, Pandya and Kerala countries and Kavari and Tambraparni rivers including special mention of the abode of Agastya. He asks them to return in a month adding that he who brings the news will be as dear to him as his own life. He specially asks Hanuman to take special care and do his best, assuring him of his success. Seeing the great confidence of Sugriva vested on Hanuman,

140. *Ibid*, (4-13-67 to 72)
141. *Ibid.*, (4-13-73)
142. 'Ram Charit Manas', (4-25-4)
143. *Ibid.*, (4-26-6)

Rama gives him his ring with his name as an insignia of his coming from Rama and tells him that he has to work with all his might. Hanuman with all humility starts on the mission.[144]

Adhyatma Ramayana practically follows Valmiki Ramayana.

The noteworthy features are as follows:

(a) Only in Kambar, the army of monkeys is not sent earlier than the meeting of Rama and Sugriva.

(b) In Kambar, Sugriva advises his armies to search in special localities making particular mention of Agastya's old abode, Tiruvengadam, Tamil Nad, Podiya Hills, the then seat of Agastya running the Tamil Sangam, Porunai River and the Mahendra mountain. Tulasidas does not refer to any of these localities. In Valmiki, however, Sugriva in the course of his advice speaks about Vindhyas, Godavari, Mahanadi, Krishna, Kavari and Tambraparni rivers, Andhra, Chola, Pandya and Kerala countries with emphasis on the place of Agastya. In Adhyatma and Tulasi, no mention has been made about any of these places.

(c) Rama's giving a detailed picture of the person of Sita is found only in Kambar.

(d) In Kambar only, the six significant incidents in the life of Rama and Sita beginning from their prematrimonial love are described by Rama to Hanuman before giving his ring to him.

(e) In Tulasi as in Adhyatma Ramayana, Sugriva after specifying the period of a month states that he will kill those who return after that period without any information regarding Sita. This is not stated in Kambar or Valmiki.

7. *The Underground Passage and Svayamprabha:*

Kambar: The monkeys leave for the search. Those going southwards search at Vindhyas, cross Narmada, reach a terrible desert and

144. 'Valmiki Ramayana', (4-44)

enter an underground dark passage.[145] Finding themselves in danger, all the monkeys seek Hanuman's protection. He asks them to follow him one after another holding the tail of the preceding monkey without any fear.[146] Hanuman leads them finding out the way squinting with his hands. They find a big city there with all pomp and glory with diets as sweet as nectar, and honey as sweet as Tamil.[147] They make there a thorough search for Sita. When they enter certain caves, they stand so exasperated that even Jambavan gets confused. Hanuman encourages them. Now they see Svayamprabha and wonder whether she is not Sita.[148] Hanuman with the signs offered by Rama assures them that it can not be Sita. Now Svayamprabha asks the monkey warriors about their whereabouts and feels happy to know of them and receives them cordially. Asked by Hanuman she tells him of her history and that of the city. She also mentions the curse on her and the time of its relief being imminent for which she had been praying there for a long time. Hanuman offers to her the way to heaven and assuming a mightly form like that of the one taken by Vamana throws the whole city far away into the deep western ocean.[149] All come out of the dark underground path. Svayamprabha praises Hanuman and goes to heaven.

Tulasi: They proceed conducting a thorough search every where. At a place they feel very thirsty but could not get water anywhere. Even Hanuman becomes desperate. He climbs the top of a hill and finds the opening of an underground pathwoy. He asks others to follow him and goes into it. To their surprise, they see gardens, lakes with flowers and a beautiful temple in which a woman is sitting in penance. All bow to her from a distance and tell their story. She offers sweet fruits and relates her own story expressing her desire to go to Rama. She asks them to just close their eyes to get out of the underground path assuring them of success in their search for Sita. Then all of them close their eyes and find themselves near the ocean.[150] She goes to Rama who confers on her deep devotion which cannot be easily obtained. She bows to Rama and goes to Badrikashrama on the Himalayas.[151]

145. 'Kamba Ramayanam', (4-14-25)
146. *Ibid.*, (4-14-30)
147. *Ibid.*, (4-14-37)
148. *Ibid.*, 4-14-50)
149. *Ibid.*, (4-14-70 and 71)
150. 'Ram Charit Manas', (4-28-3)
151. *Ibid.*, (4-28)

In Valmiki, we find certain other details as well. When all the monkeys leave the place, Rama asks Sugriva as to how he got the knowledge of all the places referred to by him. Sugriva states that his knowledge is due to his wandering about from place to place fearing Vali on return to Kishkindha after killing the demon Dundubhi in the form of Mahisha. Then Valmiki states that all the armies other than that which went towards the south have come bcak disappointed. Hanuman, Angada and others cross mountains, rivers, plains and forests searching for Sita and killing mountain-like demons. Later they arrive at the underground passage with hunger and thirst. Finding certain water-birds coming out therefrom, Hanuman presumes the presence of water therein, and all get into that passage where there is nothing but darkness. They go to the interior holding the hand of each other, and reach a very attractive bright spot with all pomp and decorations. They meet Svayamprabha, hear her history and Hanuman tells her about the search. She quenches their thirst and hunger with delicious fruits etc., and on the request of Hanuman tells all to close their eyes. So they do, and in a second, Svayamprabha gets them out with the power of her Yoga.[152] She blesses them and goes to her abode.

In Adhyatma Ramayana, the monkeys in the course of their search, see a dreadful demon, catching and eating elephants. Taking him to be Ravana, some monkeys attack him to death and understand him to be someone other than Ravana. They go further, and feel extremely thirsty and find water nowhere. Seeing a big cave and water-birds coming out of it, they enter it with Hanuman in front, holding each other serially. There is complete darkness throughout. Later they meet Svayamprabha seated on a golden throne with whose brightness the spot was lighted.[153] She expresses her desire to see Rama immediately,[154] after knowing the particulars from Hanuman, and asks them to close their eyes. When they do so, they all come out of that dark place into the forest by the power of her penance. She goes to Rama who asks her to have a boon. She begs for eternal devotion. Granting the same, Rama advises her to go to Badrikashrama and offer her prayers. So she does and attains heaven.

152. 'Valmiki Ramayana', (4-52)
153. 'Adhyatma Ramayana', (4-6-39, 40)
154. *Ibid.*, (4-6-57)

Thus we see that there are certain minor differences which need comparison. They are—

(a) The graphic description of Hanuman asking other monkeys to follow him holding the tails, and himself making out the way through the dark path by his hands, is found only in Kambar.

(b) The detailed description of the pomp and grandeur of the city and honey being as sweet as Tamil is found only in Kambar.

(c) Jambavan's getting confused in the middle of the underground path is stated only by Kambar.

(d) The monkeys taking Svayamprabha to be Sita and Hanuman's assurance to the contrary is referred to only by Kambar.

(e) In Kambar, Hanuman throws the whole City into the western ocean breaking open the dark underground path by assuming Vishwaroopa. In the other three epics, it is Svayamprabha who asks all monkeys and others to close their eyes and by the dint of the power of her penance brings them out near the sea.

(f) In Kambar, Svayamprabha goes to heaven after the breaking open of the underground dark path by Hanuman, whereas in Tulasi and Adhyatma, she goes to Rama and thereafter to Baadrikashrama for further penance and reaches heaven later. In Valmiki, however, it is only stated that she goes back to her abode.

(g) Only in Valmiki, Rama asks Sugriva how he got the knowledge of all the places referred to by him in guiding the search party, and he relates his wanderings consequent on the fear of Vali.

(h) Only in Adhyatma Ramayana, mention is made of a great giant eating elephants and his death at the hands of certain monkeys thinking him to be Ravana.

8. *Angada's despair and Sampati's advice:*

Kambar: Angada kills the demon Tumiran, and they go through several places including Tiruarangam, Tondai country, Chola country, Pandya country but do not find Sita. Finally they reach Mahendra

Mountains. Now they see the sea which appears like raising its hands of waves and inviting them informing that Sita is just on the other side of the sea.[155] They search there thoroughly and get disappointed as the end of the period of the one month fixed by Sugriva was near. Angada thinking of the consequences of returning without any information about Sita decides to commit sucide and asks for the opinion of others.[156] Jambavan states that his view is wrong and adds that, should he do so, they all will follow the same path.[157] Angada says that, if they would all die, Tara will certainly die, and thereafter finding the promise not fulfilled, Sugriva will also die. Then Rama and Lakshmana also will die and consequently Bharata and Shatrughna too whereafter Kaushalya, Sumitra and Kaikeyi are certain to follow.[158] Now the wise Jambavan advises Angada that, as he is the only successor, he should live allowing others to die, and go and inform Sugriva.[159] Hanuman advises them still to continue their search for Sita and adds that he will himself search her out.[160] He states that they must think of dying like Jatayu after exhausting all their efforts.[161] Hearing about the death of the younger brother Jatayu, Sampati who had already lost his wings, feels extremely sad and comes near the monkeys walking like a mountain shedding tears like rivers which go to make a sea. He walks felling down trees and powdering the mountains. All the monkeys fearing Sampati run away, but Hanuman understands from the facial expression his faultless nature. Sampati asks him who killed Jatayu. Hanuman replies that he will answer after hearing who he was.[162] Sampati introduces himself as the elder brother of Jatayu and Hanuman tells him all about the death of Jatayu. Sampati is drowned in sorrow. Hanuman consoles him, and states what Jatayu had told Rama. Sampati is carried to the ocean. He performs the obsequies for Jatayu and then praises the monkeys thanking them. He requests them to utter the name of Rama so that his lost wings may reappear.[163] The monkeys do so with the desired result.[164]

155. 'Kamba Ramayanam', (4-16-1)
156. *Ibid*, (4-16-9)
157. *Ibid.*, (4-16-10)
158. *Ibid.*, (4-16-14, 15)
159. *Ibid.*, (4-16-17)
160. *Ibid.*, (4-16-19, 20)
161. *Ibid.*, (4-16-21)
162. *Ibid.*, (4-16-30)
163. *Ibid.*, (4-16-48)
164. *Ibid.*, (4-16-49)

Monkeys feel astonished and enquire about his earlier life, which is related by Sampati the son of Aruna, the charioteer of Sun himself, elder to Jatayu.

He lost the wings in trying to enter the world of Sun, and the Sun God foretold that the wings will come back when Rama's name is repeated by monkeys.[165] Hearing about their search for Sita, Sampati informs them that he saw Ravana carrying away Sita, that she is imprisoned by him in the island of Lanka and mentions the difficulty in their going to that island. He adds that one extraordinarily brave among them may go there without being known to anyone in the island and inform Sita about Rama's efforts to set her free, or to go back to Rama and inform him about Sita being in Lanka.[166]

Tulasi: The monkeys seriously think about the expiry of the one month time given by Sugriva. Angada finding death on either side says that Sugriva might have killed him also at the time of the death of his father Vali but for Rama. Monkeys say weeping that they will never return without finding Sita and sit at the beach on the Kusha grass. Jambavan then consoles Angada asking him to look on Rama as incarnation of God Absolute in human form,[167] for the emancipation of all his devotees. He relates variuos other stories. Sampati accidentally hears them from within a cave nearby. He comes out, saying that God the Creator has given him ample food in the shape of so many monkeys[168] and that he will eat them all at once to satisfy his long unappeased hunger.[169] The monkeys are frightened and run pell-mell. Jambavan feels greatly worried. Angada says recollecting that Jatayu is most blessed, for he lost his life in the service to Rama.[170] Hearing this Sampati is full of pain and pleasure and comes nearer and enquires about the entire story of the death of Jatayu. Sampati pays his tributes to Rama and asks them to take him to the beach assuring them of his help. They do so, and Sampati performs his obsequies at the sea shore. Then c relates his own story and the words of one sage Chandrama that

165. *Ibid.*, (4-16-57)
166. *Ibid.*, (4-16-65)
167. *Ibid.*, (4-16-66)
168. 'Ram Charit Manas', (4-29-6, 7)
169. *Ibid.*, (4-30-1, 2)
170. *Ibid.*, (4-30-4)

in Tretayuga, when he would meet the monkeys, his wings would reappear. Jambavan requests him to tell them the place where Sita is confined. Sampati gives them information about Ravana, Lanka and the Ashokavana and Sita being there in great worry and adds that he is seeing her with his powerful eye-sight though not the monkeys.[171] He regrets his old age. He asks for one among them who can in one jump cross one hundrd yojanas, to take up the work for Rama, taking courage from him and with body strengthened by the grace of Rama.[172] He also adds that even a sinner who utters the name of Rama gets rid of the cycle of life and death. So saying Sampati leaves the place.

In Valmiki, the monkeys feel extremely worried at the expiry of the set time limit. Angada advises all to fast unto death[173] and expresses his determination to do so. Hanuman advises them not to die, assuring Angada that Sugriva will never kill him due to his extreme love for his mother Tara.[174] Angada expresses about his doubt of Sugriva stating that he is his enemy's son and will certainly be put in prison if not killed, but the throne can never be offered to him. He will never return to Kishkindha. He takes to fast asking others to return. All resort to fasting around Angada looking towards east at the beach. They begin relating the stories of Rama and his exile, death of Dasharatha, desturction at Janasthana, abduction of Sita, death of Jatayu, death of Vali, Rama's anger etc. Sampati comes walking with his huge form, happy at the prospect of good food in the shape of dead monkeys. Angada now tells Hanuman that this very bird has come like death to them and states that Jatayu gave away his life itself for Rama, whereas they could not find out Sita. Angada continues that Jatayu has really had a happy death. Sampati is wonderstruck to hear all these and enquires about Jatayu stating that Jatayu was his younger brother. Then the monkeys get him down from the mountain on his request. After knowing about each other, Sampati tells that he has seen Ravana carrying away Sita who was crying for Rama and Lakshmana[175] and gives her whereabouts, stating that from there

171. *Ibid* , (4-31)
172. *Ibid*., (4-32-1)
173. 'Valmiki Ramayana', (4-53)
174. *Ibid*., (4-54)
175. *Ibid*., (4-58)

he is able to see both Ravana and Sita. Then on the request of Sampati, he is carried to the sea-shore. He performs the obsequies and tells his own story in detail including the words of Nishakar (Chandrama). During the talk his wings come back. Then asking them to put forth all endeavours and assuring success to the monkeys, he flies off.

In Adhyatma Ramayana also, Angada says that Sugriva, the sinner, will certainly kill him if he returns, for he is the son of his enemy, and proposes to commit suicide. Hanuman consoles him by saying that he is very dear to Sugriva, for he is the only son of Tara who is now very dear to him[176] and also that Rama likes him more than Lakshmana himself. Here Hanuman tells Angada about Rama, Sita, and Lakshmana as the supreme incarnation of Vishnu, Lakshmi and Seshnaga respectively and that they themselves are born of Gods as per their earlier prayers. Then all reach the sea searching for Sita and are terrified to see the vast sea and to think of Sugriva. They begin to fast unto death. They see Sampati being happy at the prospect of a big feast of monkeys. They fear death in vain and praise the sacrifice of Jatayu, which attracts the attention of Sampati. He hears about Jatayu's death and their mission from Angada and then tells his own relationship. He is taken to the sea where he performs the obsequies. Then he tells that he had seen Sita being taken by Ravana, and that she is in the island of Lanka. He asks for one who can jump a hundred yojanas to take up the job for Rama. Sampati then relates his life history and the words of the sage Chandrama, whereafter new wings spring up. He wishes them god-speed, and leaves them.

There are certain minor differences in the story as well as in the treatment. They are—

(a) Only in Kambar, the answer of Jambavan about the ultimate death of Kaushalya, Sumitra, Kaikeyi down to Rama himself is mentioned. Hanuman advises them to continue their search and says that he himself will find out Sita.

(b) Only in Kambar, Hanuman says that if at all they die, they must do so as Jatayu did bravely fighting for a sacred

176. 'Adhyatma Ramayana,' (4-7-12)

cause. This is heard by Sampati. In other three spics, the monkeys simply speak of their sad end without reference to Jatayu.

(c) Sampati's extreme sorrow on the death of his younger brother Jatayu, and the strength of both are stated in Kambar in much more detailed a manner than in the other epics.

(d) Only in Kambar, Sampati requests the monkeys to repeat the name of Rama for getting back his wings, whereas in the other three the wings spring up by themselves as he tells the whereabouts of Sita. (Thus in Kambar, Hanuman finds out Sita by himself and learns the efficacy of Rama's name from Sampati).

(e) In Kambar only, Sampati offers an advice viz., one of the monkeys to go to Lanka or go direct to Rama to inform him of the place of Sita. In the other three, Sampati only asks them to go to Lanka by taking a very long jump and do the needful.

(f) In Tulasi, following Valmiki and Adhyatma, Angada has doubts about the behaviour of Sugriva, whereas no such fear complex or doubt in Angada is given expression to by Kambar.

(g) The idea on the part of Angada and other monkeys to fast unto death is not referred to in Kambar. Tulasi only states:

> "All the monkeys went to the shore of the salt sea and there spread grass and sat".

In Valmiki and Adhyatma, the idea of fast unto death is stated.

(h) In Kambar it is Hanuman who tells about Jatayu, in Tulasi it is Jambavan and in the two source epics the vanaras while relating various incidents of the life of Rama.

(i) In Tulasi, Jambavan consoles Angada whereas in Kambar as in the other two epics, Hanuman consoles Angada and other monkeys.

(j) When Angada has doubts about Sugriva, none clarifies his doubts in Tulasi. In Valmiki and Adhyatma, Hanuman speaks of the affection of Sugriva in the present circumstances for him as Tara is now very dear to him and he her only son.

(k) In Kambar, the Sun god had told Sampati the time and the manner of the reappearance of his wings, whereas it is sage Nishakara or Chandrama in Valmiki, Adhyatma and Tulasi.

(l) In Kambar, the repetition of the name of Rama brings back the wings of Sampati, whereas in Tulasi and the other two epics, the wings reappear as soon as he tells the monkeys the way to get back Sita.

9. *Jambavan Inspires Hanuman:*

Kambar: The monkeys think about the action to be taken. Many express their diffidence to croos the sea and Angada expresses his inability to return back.[177] Bramha's son Jambavan also expresses his inability and tells Angada that it is only Hanuman who can take up the task. He reminds Hanuman about his immortality, great wisdom, extreme courage and unimaginable strength,[178] remembering to him his effort to get the sun thinking that to be a fruit, and also that he can assume a form like that of Meru mountain or an atom according to his will,[179] together with his deep devotion towards Rama and righteousness. He asks Hanuman to cross the sea and bring news about Sita after tracing her in Lanka.[180] Hanuman with all humility states that there are very many who can cross not only this sea but all the seven seas at one jump. However, he offers himself for the sacred work and states emphatically that, if they want, he can bring the island itself uprooting it and killing all the demons,[181] and assures them of the attempt ending in success. Then taking leave of the monkeys he climbs up the Mahendra mountain and takes so big a form as to touch the sky itself like the Trivikrama form of Vamana.[182] He gets ready to cross the sea.

Tulasi: All the monkeys express their inability to take up the task. Jambava tells of his inability due to old age. Angada expresses difficulty in returning back,[183] and Jambavan also tells him that he

177. 'Kamba Ramayanam', (4-17-4)
178. *Ibid.*, (4-17-9)
179. *Ibid.*, (4-17-12)
180. *Ibid.*, (4-17-19)
181. *Ibid.*, (4-17-22)
182. *Ibid.*, (4-17-26)
183. 'Ram Charit Manas', (4-33-1)

should not take up the task upon himself as he is their chief, though he is fit in every way. Then he tells Hanuman who is keeping silent, about his wisdom, intelligence and great strength, adding that nothing to him is impossible on this earth, for his very birth is for the service of Rama.[184] Hanuman's form becomes like a mountain hearing the words of Jambavan. His colour becomes golden as king of mountains. He roars again and again and says that he will cross the sea in a jump and return from Lanka after killing Ravana and his allies. Then on his seeking advice, Jambavan wants him only to see Sita and inform her about the position, so that Rama may come with the forces and kill Ravana and the other demons and bring Sita back.[185]

In Valmiki, when all the monkeys including Jambavan express their inability, Angada offers himself but states that he may not be able to return. Jambavan also disapproves his undertaking the task as he is the leader. Then he encourages Hanuman telling the story of his birth and brave action in life[186] and asks him to take up the work upon himself. Hanuman assumes Vishwaroopa pleasing all the monkeys. He speaks of his might and assures them of his return with success.[187] Then Jambavan tells Hanuman that till his return all monkeys will be standing on the leg and that their life is in his hand. Hanuman gets over the Mahendra mountain and presses it down with his hands for the jump, thereby bringing out fountains of water below. All sages and animals living in that mountain leave it out of fear.

Adhyatma Ramayana has practically followed Valmiki. However Hanuman here says that he will burn Lanka to ashes, kill Ravana with all his people and return safe with Sita. He also states that, should they wish, he will tie the neck of Ravana with a rope, bring the whole of Lanka on his left hand and place the same before Rama, or else just see Sita and return.[188] Jambavan advises him to just see Sita and return leaving the rest of the action to Rama. Hanuman reaches the mountain top.

184. *Ibid.*, (4-33-3)
185. *Ibid*,. (4-33-6)
186. 'Valmiki Ramayana', (4-66)
187. *Ibid*., (4-67)
188. 'Adhyatma Ramayana', (4-9-22 to 24)

As already stated, there are slight differences:

(a) In Kambar as in Valmiki, Hanuman after getting inspired by Jambavan does not ask anybody as to what action he should take, whereas in Adhyatma and Tulasi, Hanuman asks about what he should do.

(b) Only in Kambar, Hanuman gives expression to his humility stating that there are very many others who can take up the task and achieve success, and that he is one among them.

(c) The statement of Angada about his inability to return is found in all the four epics. Only in Kambar, Jambavan does not state that Angada should not take up the task as he is the leader.

(d) Kambar, following Valmiki, has not made Jambavan advise Hanuman to just see Sita and return, leaving the rest of the action to Rama as in Tulasi who follows Adhyatma.

(e) Valmiki alone has mentioned about the statement of Jambavan to Hanuman that all monkeys will continue to stand on one leg till his return and that their lives are in his hands.

(f) Only in Tulasi, Jambavan states that the very purpose of the birth of Hanuman is to serve Rama which automatically inspires Hanuman to assume the huge form.

V. SUNDARA KANDA

1. *Hanuman's leap over the sea*:

Kambar: Hanuman in his mightly huge figure sees the Devaloka —the land of gods—and takes it to be Lanka, but, seeing the Devas there, realises it to be Devaloka and concludes that Sita can never be there.[1] From there he finds Lanka in its pomp and grandeur.[2] Then to leap over the sea, he presses his feet on the Mahendra mountain. The animals, serpents, lions, elephants and all other animals run helter-shelter. The top of the hill gets powdered and sends forth sparks and the mountain itself shakes and circles round like the one used in churning the ocean of milk. It breaks in the middle. Even devas and sages are terrified. Pressing the mountain down, Hanuman flies into the air and the palmirahs and other trees, and elephants and other animals are thrown into the air as if marching towards Lanka, and fall into the sea. The velocity of the flight tears the ground below and Hanuman sees the underworld of Nagas, the serpents whereof see Hanuman and get frightened. Hanuman's quick flight throws the sea-water into Lanka. The eight directions tremble. He flies with his tail up as if measuring the upper worlds, and hands stretched in front. Heaven and earth get frightened.

1. 'Kamba Ramayanam'. (5-1-2)
2. *Ibid*.. (5-1-3)

Now comes the Mainaka Mountain spreading both its wings from within the sea as came Iravata elephant or moon from the ocean of milk, welcomes him and offers a little rest.[3] Hanuman looks at it with suspicion, brushes it aside with his chest and proceeds.[4] The Mainaka in a human from chases Hanuman and explains his good intention. Hanuman tells him of his mission on behalf of Rama and regrets his inability to accept his hospitality for want of time and pleads absence of hunger or thurst[5] and thanks him for his love. He goes so fast that even the Sun becomes apprehensive.

Then arrives Surasa in the form of a demoness across his way at the request of the devas to test his strength, and states that he will be her food and asks him to enter her mouth.[6] Hanuman replies that he will certainly comply with her request being one from a woman, but on his return after fulfilling his mission. She wants to eat him up then and there. Hanuman asks her to eat him up if she can. She opens her mouth and Hanuman assumes a very huge form, but finding the time fleeting, he soon assumes a very small form, gets into her mouth and comes out before she could completely close.[7] Then Surasa resumes her real form, and wishing him, leaves the place. Hanuman also praises her and resumes his flight.

Now appears the terrible demoness Angaradhara (Simhika) on his way, as one who can swallow the whole of an ocean. Hanuman goes into her mouth and comes out with her intestines tearing open her body. He flies forward realising that the repetition of the name of Rama is the only way of achieving success.[8] He repeats the name and immediately reaches Lanka landing on a hillock and is astonished at the pomp and splendour and pleasures and luxuries of the island.

Tulasi: Hanuman starts with Rama's name in heart. He climbs upon a beautiful mountain on the beach and jumps with a force that sends down the hill into the underworld. He flies like Rama's arrow.[9]

3. *Ibid.* (5-1-39)
4. *Ibid.*, (5-1-52)
5. *Ibid.*, (5-1-50)
6. *Ibid.*, (5-1-66, 67)
7. *Ibid.*, (5-1-71)
8. *Ibid*, (5-1-88)
9. 'Ram Charit Manas', (5-1-4)

On the words of the sea, mountain Mainaka comes up to offer rest to Hanuman. *Hanuman touches it and bows* saying that he will have no rest without finishing Rama's work.[10] He goes ahead. Sulasa, the Mother of Serpents is sent by the devas to test Hanuman, and he gets rid of her by entering her mouth and coming out, first becoming very big and then very small in size.[11] She tells him the object of her coming and goes away in her real form after blessing him. He thereafter meets a demoness Simhika (Angaradhara) who tries to catch him through his shadow, but Hanuman kills her, and crosses the ocean.[12] He climbs over a big mountain there fearlessly.

The story is practically the same in Kamba Ramayanam and Tulasi Ramayan, and the two source works but for certain differences in details which are as follows:

(a) Kambar alone describes the huge figure assumed by Hanuman on the Mahendra mountain so as to be able to see the Devaloka and Lanka.

(b) After three obstacles in his way, Hanuman becomes aware of the efficiency of the repetition of Rama's name. This idea is not brought out in Tulasi and the other two source epics. However as in Adhyatma Ramayana, Tulasi's Hanuman is said to be repeating the name right from the begining of his flight.

(c) The order of the three obstacles in the way of Hanuman according to Valmiki, Kambar and Tulasidas is the same, being Mainaka, Surasa and Angaradhara or Simhika, whereas in Adhyatma Ramayana the order is Surasa, Mainaka and then Simhika

2. *Hanuman enters Lanka :*

Kambar: Hanuman sees Lanka and its houses with tiles of gold. Palaces are so high as to touch the sky. Lanka contains all in plenty. Music is exquisite, chariots are grand. The whole city is shining. The drinks and diets are luxurious. The parks are beautiful. The whole city is merry with games and dances, with pleasures of

10. *Ibid* (5-1)
11. *Ibid.*, (5-2-5, 6)
12. *Ibid.*, (5-3-3)

all types and with riches of all varieties. Hanuman contracts his size, the sun sets and darkness prevails when the demons begin roaming. The goddesses come to serve Ravana. Moon rises with stars above. Hanuman tries to enter Lanka and goes near the high city wall. He sees the main city gate and its watchmen with their army and feels that it may take time to cross that gate. Hence, he tries to get into the city by jumping over the wall at some distance away, when Lanka Devi, the Guardian spirit of Lanka, attacks and rebukes him. Hanuman mildly tells her that he, a poor monkey, wants just to satisfy his curiosity by seeing the city without committing any mischief.[13] This enrages her. She smiles at Hanuman who also smiles expressing his determination to get into the City. Lanka Devi throws her lance on Hanuman. He breaks it into two in sport as also her other weapons. She attacks him and he holds her hands with one hand and hits her with the other. She falls down vomiting blood.[14] She gets up and prostrating before him says that Brahma had once told her that when a monkey hits her, the city would surely have its doomsday.[15] She praises him and leaves for heaven.[16] Hanuman enters the city contemplating upon the lotus feet of Rama.

Tulasi: Hanuman sees the fort and the city in all their pomp and glory. He assumes the form of a mosquito and tries to enter, but sees a demoness Lankini asking him, how dares he go in ignoring her. She says that he will be her food, at which he gives her one blow with his fist throwing her down vomiting blood.[17] She gets up with folded hands and tells him that when she had to leave the Devaloka as a demoness, Brahma had told her that when a monkey would throw her down, the foll of demons would be near.[18] She feels happy at having met him and asks him to enter the city. He goes in assuming a small form thinking of Rama.

This part of the story is the same in all the four works except for some details. Valmiki has practically been followed by Kambar

13. 'Kamba Ramayanam', (5-2-83)
14. *Ibid.*, (5-2-94)
15. *Ibid*, (5-2)91)
16. *Ibid.*, (5-2-95) See p. 206 of V. V. S. Aiyar's Kamba Ramayanam—A Study.
17. Ram Charit Manas,, (5-4-2)
18. *Ibid.*, (5-4-4)

and Tulasidas. Adhyatma Ramayana has a different version of Lankini telling Hanuman the whole story of Rama and Sita and the place where Sita was.[19]

The salient points to be noted here are the following:

(a) Only in Kambar, Lankini after relating the words of Brahma goes back to heaven.

(b) Kambar and Tulasidas, following Valmiki, have not made Lankini relate the whole story of Rama and Sita and the exact place where Sita was kept by Ravana.

3. *The Search and Discovery:*

Kambar: Hanuman enters the city in a tiny form 'like a drop of acid for the milk of Rakshasa power.'[20] It is night but the brightness makes him wonder whether it is day or night. He goes by the extreme sides of the roads and searches for Sita in many places observing demonesses and others immersed in pleasures, being served by goddesses. He assumes different forms according to circumstances. He sees a gigantic dark figure (Kumbhakarna) in deep sleep and mistakes him for Ravana and gets furious, but then finds out the correct identity. He goes to the palace of Vibhishana, observes him at close quarters and thinks that he is the very personification of Righteousness.[21] He goes next to the place where Indra was previously kept imprisoned. Then he comes to the residence of Indrajit guarded by many demons with various weapons. He sees the great Indrajit as handsome as Muruha, the six-headed son of Shiva. Imagining his great prowess and strength from his personality, he begins thinking:

> "A terrific fight I see in the days to come
> When Lakshmana and Ram encounter him.[22]

19. Adhyatma Ramayana (5-1-48 to 56)
20. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (5-2-96)
21. *Ibid.*, (5-2-136)
22. *Ibid.*, (5-2-141)

"Except
Vishnu or Brahma or Shiv, can any face
This Rakshasa upon the field?"[23]

He passes through the houses of Akṣhaya, Atikaya and jumps over a high fort-wall surrounded by a ditch of sweet smelling water with lotuses. He finds in the fort many damsels 'pining for Ravana's favour but he had forgotten all his dames after he had conceived his passion for Sita.' There is heavenly music, dancing and gambling over the crowns of conqured kings. Hanuman comes to the magnificient palace of Mandodari after crossing again that ditch, and sees her. Ramba, Menaka, Tilottama, Urvashi and other goddesses are massaging her soft legs, gently waving the deer-tailed fans over her and 'singing in tones sweeter than the sugarcane juice.'[24] Looking at her marvellous beauty, he thinks that it must be Sita, and sorowfully tells within himself. :

"Ah me,
In vain has been my huge gigantic size
And more than mortal power. But die that thought!
If she who sleeps o'er there should hap to be
Sita—her virtue trodden underfoot
And bond of love and hastity undone—
With this day ends th' unsullied honour of Ram.
But shall it end alone? No, no! With it
Shall end this town with all her Rakshasas,
And after I have killed them all, I will
My own accursed life straightway destroy!"[25]

He argues:

"She looks not human, but seems a Danava
Or Yaksha dame. Ah woe is me that I
Could entertain this sinful thought! For can
A woman who has looked on Ram as Lord
E'er cast her eyes upon another being
Though he were Manmatha himself?"[26]

23. *Ibid.*, (5-2-142)
24. *Ibid.*, (5-2-197)
25. *Ibid.*, (5-2-200)
26. *Ibid.*, (5-2-201)

After careful observation of the postures of her face and limbs he forecasts that her days of pomp and pleasure will end soon. Then he enters the palace of Ravana, when the earth trembles, demons get omens and there appears thunder without lightning. Hanuman reads in them the approach of calamity for the demons and says:

"A few days more and there will be nothing left
Of all this matchless splendour!"[27]

Ravana is sleeping like 'a black ocean scattering gems and gold'. Over a thousand damsels are serving him with all comforts but the thought of Sita is disturbing his heart even in sleep and wearing his life away.[28] The sandal paste and the breeze over it serve but to add to his burning passion. His body looks like a snake hole, as his soul has already got imprisoned at the place of Sita.[29] The heat of his passion for Sita has burnt the flowers on his body with the bees inside.[30] Hanuman sees him smiling while asleep, for he dreams that Sita enters his chamber.[31] Seeing Ravana so fast asleep after abducting and imprisoning Sita, Hanuman's anger brims like a volcano shooting fire through his eyes, and he feels like kicking down Ravana then and there. He says within himself:

"Shall he with life escape e'en when I've seen
Him here? Let me but kick his crowned heads
And break his branching arms, and end this town;
I care not, what be falleth me thereafter ! "[32]

He, however thinks of the command of the Lord and considers that any such enterprise may be out of place. He resolves:

"Let me restarin this rage, for overshadowed
Will be the fame of Ram, if a Vanar—low
Should end the wicked one who stole his spouse
And keeps her in captivity."[33]

27. *Ibid*., (5-2-205)
28. *Ibid*., (5-2-208)
29. *Ibid*., (5-2-210)
30. *Ibid*., (5-2-212)
31. *Ibid*., (5-2-214)
32. *Ibid*., (5-2-220)
33. *Ibid*., (5-2-223)

Finding 'the signs of unrequited passion' in Ravana, Hanuman feels consoled that Sita is safe from his 'sacrilegious touch.'[34]

Hanuman comes out and searches for Sita. Getting disapponted he soliloquises:

"Alas! that jewelled one is not in this
Extensive fort. Has he perchance, killed her
Because she would not yield her charms to him?
Or has he eaten her in his wicked rage?[35]

"Shall I yon Ravana ply with blows, and force
Him to discover Sita?[36]

"Sampati, King of Vultures said he saw
That lovely one in Lanka. E'en his words
Are falsfied? But shall I die without
Even revenge? For there is not a doubt
That Ravana did steal out Sita fair;
I may not die therefore, before I lift
This citadel and cast it in the sea."[37]

When he had searched all the houses, he happens to see the beautiful Ashoka garden by chance,[38] the only place yet to be seen. He would blow the city into pieces, if Sita is not found there.[39] Jumping from tree to tree, he stops on a very tall one. He sees many demonesses with weapons in a crowd and looks carefully at that place The poet now says:

"There in the midst of black-skinned Rakshasis,
Seated as a flash of lightning in the bosom
Of a sable cloud, he saw the Sun-flower bright
That smiles alone to the light of Kaustubha—
The brilliant Sun-like gem on Rama's breast."[40]

34. *Ibid*,. (5-2-224)
35. *Ibid*., (5-2-226)
36. *Ibid*., (5-2-230)
37. *Ibid*., (5-2-232, 233)
38. *Ibid*., (5-2-234)
39. *Ibid*., (5-3-1)
40. *Ibid*., (5-3-63)

Finding her like a swan in the sea of her own tears, he concludes that she is none else but Sita.[41] With joy he exclaims:

"Dharma yet lives, and I will seek no more
My death for I have searched, and lo, the Lord
Has blest these eyes with sight of Holy Sita.........
The wicked tyrant of the Universe
Has wrought this guile for his own destined doom;
For Ram is none but Vishnu come to earth,
And Sita, Lakshmi of the lotus throne!"[42]

Hanuman now feels recompensed in having crossed the ocean for his Lord. He imagines as if seeing her virtue unsullied though not her form which looked like a gem in dirt or a moon dulled by sunlight:

"If Sita should from highest self-control
Have fallen even by the breadth of an hair,
I feared Ram's wrath would clean deluge the world.
That fear now is gone, and earth is now
For ev'r immune from ill.[43]

"Sita, behold, has given a lustre new
To womanhood and chastity by the life
That she is leading in this Lanka proud."[44]

At this sight he feels it a pity that Rama is not there to see her in this devout condition. He thinks:

"What pity, 'tis not given to Ram to see
With his own eyes this holy one as she
Does lead her life austere in Lanka's grove!"[45]

41. *Ibid.*, (5-3-64)
42. *Ibid.*, (5-3-65)
43. *Ibid.*, (5-3-71)
44. *Ibid.*, (5-3-73)
45. *Ibid*, (5-3-73)

He exclaims:

> "In sooth, cna Sin O'er Virtue e'er prevail?"[46]

Tulasi: Assuming a tiny form, Hanuman searches house after house and sees innumerable warriors. He sees the Ten Headed sleeping, but not Sita.[47] There Hanuman sees another house with a temple of Vishnu with ensigns of Rama and a Tulasi Plant and he feels happy.[48] He wonders:

> "Lanka is inhabited by none but demons; how comes the dwelling of a pious man here."[49]

At that moment awakes Vibhishana uttering the name, 'Rama, Rama'. Hanuman feels delighted to find a real devotee. Fearing no harm Hanuman takes the form of a Brahmin[50] and accosts him. Vibhishana pays obeisance and enquires:

> "Are you one of Hari's servants? For I feel an instinctive affection for you. Or are you Rama himself, lover of the humble, come to make me greatly blessed?"[51]

Hanuman tells him about himself and his mission. Vibhishana, greatly moved, says:

> "Hearken, Son of the Wind, I live here like a wretched tongue between the teeth. My friend, will the Lord of the Solar Race ever have mercy on me, as on one who lacks a Lord? My body is a body of darkness, and I know no righteous practice, nor is there in my heart devotion to his lotus feet; yet now, O Hanuman, I feel more confidence, for without Hari's favour there is no meeting with the good. It is only because Raghubir has shown me kindness that you of your own accord have made yourself known to me."[52]

46. *Ibid.*, (5-3-76)
47. 'Ram Charit Manas' (5-5-4)
48. *Ibid.*, (5-5)
49. *Ibid.*, (5-6-1)
50. *Ibid* , (5-6-3)
51. *Ibid* , (5-6-4)
52. *Ibid* , (5-7-1 to 3)

Hanuman says that the Lord loves his servant, and cites with tearful eyes his own example, a monkey whose name, if uttered early morning may entail starvation for the day.[53] Then Vibhishana tells him all about how Sita is living there[54] and how to see her. Hanuman goes in his previous form to the Ashoka Garden,[55] sees Sita and pays obeisance mentally.

This is one of the most significant scenes wherein Kambar and Tulasidas greatly differ. Kambar has to a very great extent followed Valmiki. Adhyatma Ramayana has a different story wherein Lankini herself informs Hanuman about the place of Stia. The important points are:

(a) In Kambar, Hanuman first sees Kumbhakarna and mistakes him for Ravana. In Tulasi, Hanuman goes to Ravana after searching in all other houses. No specific mention of other persons is made. Valmiki gives a long list—Prahasta, Mahaparshwa, Kumbhakarna, Vibhishana, Meghanada and thirtyfour other persons as having been seen by Hanuman. Adhyatma Ramayana just says that Hanuman wandered in all places including the king's palace, and went straight to Ashoka garden remembering the words of Lankini.

Thus only Kambar gives detailed description of Hanuman's visits to the palaces of Kumbhakarna, Vibhishana, Indrajit, Akshaya, Atikaya, the fort with many damsels pining with passion for Ravana and various other places in a picturesque manner. In Kambar, Hanuman sees Mandodari first and then Ravana. Valmiki says the contrary.

Here it may be mentioned that Kambar's Ravana is in intense passion for Sita, awake or asleep, forgetting all other pleasures and has hallucinations and dreams of Sita, wheras Valmiki's Ravana lives a normal life with pleasure pursuits of wine and women followed by deep sleep. Anger in Hanuman at the sight of Ravana is mentioned only by Kambar.

53. *Ibid*., 5-7-4)
54. *Ibid*., (5-8-2)
55. *Ibid*., (5-8-3)

His dejection in not finding Sita is described on the same lines in Valmiki and Kambar.

(b) In Kambar, Hanuman comes to the Ashoka garden by chance during the course of his search, whereas in Tulasi, Vibhishana directs him. In Valmiki, Hanuman deliberately sets out to search in the Ashoka garden, the only remaining place without any element of chance. In Adhyatma, Lankini gives the information.

(c) In Kambar, Hanuman identifies Sita from the description given by Rama, whereas in Tulasi, it is from Vibhishana's description of the place. In Valmiki, he searches in the Ashoka garden and finds out Sita in dirty clothes sitting in a very high round building touching the very heaven. In Adhyatma, he traces Sita under a big tree as indicated by Lankini.

(d) Kambar's Hanuman only feels blessed at his being able to see Sita in that condition and pities Rama for not having similar opportunity to witness the example of innocent womanhood suffering for preservation of honour and the victory of virtue over vice in the long run.

(e) Only Tulasidas mentions the temple of Vishnu in the house of Vibhishana. Here Hanuman enters this house in the form of a Brahmin and Vibhishana awakes uttering the name of Rama. After a conversation, Hanuman gets the whereabouts of Sita from him. None of the other three has handled the situation in this manner.

4. *Ravana sees Sita in the Ashoka Garden:*

Kambar: Sita is despondent sorrounded by the demonesses with no sleep or droop of eye-lids or even wink. She is 'like a doe amidst wild fanged tigers'. She is ever thinking of Rama in mute worship, weeping and shedding floods of tears. Desparate at times, she even thinks of giving up her life. Sometimes she feels that Rama will certainly come and receive her back.[56] Feeling for her thoughtless words to Lakshmana she fears that Rama may perhaps forsake

56. 'Kamba Ramayanam', (5-3-9)

her. Then she thinks that his mothers and brothers might have come and taken him back to Ayodhya.[57] She brings to memory Rama's words to Guha:

> "To him who plied the Ganges deep, Guha—
> A lowly forester as e'en he was—
> 'Lakshmana my brother here is brother thine;
> And thou my comrade; and this maiden here,
> Is brother's wife to thee'."[58]

Once at night, all the demonesses sleep and the good Trijata alone is awake. At that opportune moment, Sita tells her that as her left eye-brow and forehead vibrated, some good may follow,[59] for it was so before the breaking of Shiva's bow by Rama. Trijata concurs and confirms it with her own dream of a golden bee coming near Sita's ear and singing.[60] Then Trijata tells her about her dream that Ravana with oiled heads was drawn in a chariot by big and strong donkeys southwards,[61] that his children were looking at this and he then did not return.[62] She adds that in her dream Ravana's palace was destroyed by a thunderbolt early morning, the army was destroyed, the city was set on fire, the women of Lanka had become widows, including Mandodari who died at the very spot.[63] This was her earlier dream. Then she relates another dream of two lions coming with a huge army of tigers and driving away intoxicated elephants and of a peacock which had got into the place of the elephants going over to the lions, whereafter a lamp with a thousand flames was taken by a fair lady from Ravana's palace to that of Vibhishana. Sita naturally understands the inner purport of the dream and requests Trijata with folded hands to go back and resume her sleep and the remaining part of the dream.[64] The demonesses awake and surround her. Hanuman sees Sita at this time. He climbs upon a tall tree and hides himself.

57. Ibid., (5-3-17)
58. *Ibid.*, (5-3-23)
59. *Ibid.*, (5-3-32)
60. *Ibid.*, (5-3-37)
61. *Ibid.*, (5-3-40)
62. *Ibid.*, (5-3-41)
63. *Ibid.*, (5-3-49)
64. *Ibid.*, (5-3-53)

Ravana comes served and supported by Urvashi, Menaka, Tilottama, Rambha etc.[65] He is agitated by passion for Sita on the one hand and anger at her rejection on the other. The gods get terrified. Sita looks like a deer set upon by a tiger. Hanuman prays for Sita. Ravana 'with lust and shrinking shame at war within his mind', halting humbly, speaks thus—

"O Koil sweet of the slender waist, when wilt
Thou look on me with ruth?"[66]

Then he says that the days are passing away one after another, and that though he can have his wish easily fulfilled in any of the three worlds, it is only in her case that he begs for her grace. He puts it to her that her youth is being wasted and that she should utilise it lest it should wear off without any fruit. He flatters—

"It's not
For me, I grieve: I shall die willingly,
If that's thy wish: but if thy heart is turned
To bitterness, show me another one
Beside thyself for charm that never cloys,
And love and beauty's perfect shape."[67]

Touching a note on the race of Janaka, he appeals to Sita not to let any one say that the Janaka's race though rich in all other respects, 'lacks in tenderness and ruth and has a niggetted heart.'[68] He describes her would-be-future:

"Fortune has placed within thy reach, unasked,
Th' imperial crown of all the worlds, and wives
Of gods will be maids to wait on thee;
And thou dost scorn the gift? Was ever fool
Like thee? O scorn it not but do accept
Me as thy slave, who rule the triple worlds
Without a rival or a peer!"[69]

65. *Ibid.*, (5-4-2)
66. *Ibid.*, (5-4-24)
67. *Ibid.*, (5-4-32)
68. *Ibid.*, (5-4-33)
69. *Ibid.*, (5-4-36, 37)

So saying he raises his folded hands above his heads and prostrates at her feet.[70]

These words of Ravana are so bitter to Sita as to rouse her anger and contempt. She scorns at him saying:

"Improper are these noxious words of yours
To woman treading path of wedded life:
Oh list to me and learn, you scum of the earth!
Seen you e'er women stony-hearted but
With chastity?[71]

"Because you were afraid that day, you sought
His absence, so you sent a crafty deer,
And by your skill in Maya came disguised:
If live you would, this moment set me free.[72]

"You are a fighter bold indeed! Did not
Jatayus fell you down to earth that day."[73]

She asks him whether he did not hear the huge sound produced in the breaking of the Shiva's bow by her lord? Then she continues:

"You boast of hill uplifted: you declare,
'The mammoths guarding points twice four I crushed';
You dared not come the while Ram's brother stood
At hand; yet bold you are to prostrate flat
At feet of woman too!"[74]

She advises him to retrace his path lest Lanka and all its inhabitants should get their doomsday:

"O you of baleful eyes inspiring fear
In heaven and earth, I pray forsake forthwith
Your evil ways."[75]

70. *Ibid.*, (5-4-37)
71. *Ibid.*, (5-4-39)
72. *Ibid.*, (5-4-41)
73. *Ibid.*, (5-4-42)
74. *Ibid.*, (5-4-46)
75. *Ibid.*, (5-4-49)

Sita warns him not to mistake Rama for an ordinary person like Vishnu or Brahma or Shiva[76] and says:

> "O think not lightly these are but mere men;
> If mightly Kartavir of thousand arms
> Was by a man laid low, do ponder well
> On might of Ram![77]

She cautions him not to bank upon the lack of numerical strength:

> "If you despise them for they are but two,
> The world's Destroyer on the Day of Doom,
> Is he but one or more? When war is come,
> How true are these my words you shall perceive!
> And perish dire."[78]

She wants him to think of Hiranyaksha and his younger brother Hiranyakashipu, Khara, Dooshana, Kartaveerya etc., and take lessons from their lives.

The effect on Ravana is just the reverse and he turns blind with rage urging him to tear and eat her up, but his passion gets the upper hand. Hanuman from behind the branches of the tree feels like crushing Ravana. But Ravana calms down and says mildly to Sita that his first thought was to kill her but that would mean his own death.[79] He tells her that all his victories were but sports. He also states that his leaving Rama alive is with a purpose i.e., to save her life lest she should die on hearing of Rama's death. This is his argument for having brought Sita in the absence of Rama and Lakshmana.[80] He boasts of being greater than all others in valour, for he continues to rule the earth and heaven even that day. He promises to bring the two brothers before her alive as his slaves. The two brothers, he says, should not die, for it is they that gave him the opportunity to meet her. However, he continues, he can certainly take their lives off, if on such proof of his prowess alone, she would

76. *Ibid.*, (5-4-49)
77. *Ibid.*, (5-4-50)
78. *Ibid.*, (5-4-51)
79. *Ibid.*, (5-4-65)
80. *Ibid.*, (5-4-66)

feel happy.[81] Ravana gets a little furious and says that he will even go straight to Ayodhya and Kill Bharata and his people and then march on to Mithila and burn the whole city and drink the blood of her people.[82] Finally he says that she is bringing ruin on herself by provoking him and gives her two months time within which to make up her mind to become his on pain of death.[83] With this ultimatum to Sita, Ravana leaves the place frowning at her but with her image in his heart. He orders the demonesses to persuade her somehow or other. The demonesses use all their tactics, and Sita feels annoyed at them when Trijata consoles her reminding her of the dream. The demonesses cease their foul practices.

Tulasi: Sita is there under the Ashoka tree for the whole night contemplating upon the greatness of Rama. Hanuman is hidden with sad thoughts. Ravana comes with many well-decorated ladies. He tries to win over Sita through all the four kinds of tactics viz., 'Conciliation, bribery, estrangement and threat'. He says:

> "O wise and fair of face! Mandodari and all the other queens I will make your servants—I swear it—if you will look me but once!"[84]

Sita addresses him as a blade of grass, and thinking of her own lord says :

> "Listen to me, Ten-headed! Would a lotus ever bloom in a firefly's glow? Consider this well; wretch, have you no thought at all for Raghubir's arrows? Villain! You stole me away when I was alone. O vile and shameless, have you no shame?"[85]

Feeling insulted by her words, Ravana drags out his sword and speaks in angry words:

81. *Ibid.*, (5-4-71)
82. *Ibid.*, (5-4-72)
83. *Ibid.*, (5-4-73)
84. Ram Charit Manas (5-9-2, 3)
85. *Ibid.*, (5-9-4, 5)

"Sita you have dishonoured me! Therefore with my dread sword will I cut off your head! Nay, obey my behest without delay, my fair one or prepare to meet your death."[86]

Sita retorts by saying that either the hands of her lord which are like lotus garland or his (Ravana's) sword will touch her neck, and requests his sword Chandrahas:

"O Sword, relieve me of my burning woe, born of the fire of separation from Raghupati! The blade you wield is cool and sharp and kind; relieve me of the burden of my grief!"[87]

Hearing these words, Ravana rushes forward to kill her, but Mandodari intervenes and advises him.[88] Then Ravana asks the demonesses to trouble Sita intensively and tells her that if she does not yield within a month's time, he will behead her.[89] He goes back and the demonesses begin troubling her assuming various dreadful forms. Among them is one Trijata, wise and devoted to Rama. She relates her dream to all the demonesses and asks them to serve Sita and be benefited.[90] She says that in her dream a monkey burnt the whole of Lanka and killed all the demons and that Ravana with bald heads and naked body and no hand riding on a donkey went towards the south yielding the throne to Vibhishana, and Sita was taken back by Rama.[91] She feels sure that the dream will certainly turn out to be true in a couple of days. All the demonesses get frightened at the words of Trijata and fall at the feet of Sita[92] and disperse.[93]

This scene shows differences between Kambar and Tulasidas. In Valmiki, after Ravana leaves Sita, Trijata relates her dream and Sita feels certain happy omens. In Adhyatma Ramayana also Trijata's dream is mentioned after Ravana leaves Sita, but the scene contains also a dream of Ravana of a monkey with a message from

86. *Ibid.*, (5-10-1)
87. *Ibid.*, (5-10-3)
88. *Ibid.*, (5-10-4)
89. *Ibid.*, (5-10-5)
90. *Ibid.*, (5-11-1)
91. *Ibid.*, (5-11-2, 3)
92. *Ibid.*, (5-11-4)
93. *Ibid.*, (5-11)

Rama sitting amidst the branches of a tree assuming a very small form. It is because of this that he goes to Sita and threatens her so that the monkey may see it and carry the news to Rama.[94]

After a comparative study, we find the following to be noteworthy:

(a) In Kambar, Trijata relates her dream when Sita is greatly worried before the arrival of Ravana. She is her only good companion and tells Sita of the dream when the others are asleep. In Tulasi, Trijata gathers all the demonesses and relates her dream after Ravana leaves. Trijata is stated to be a devotee of Rama. The demonesses turn a better leaf on hearing of the dream. Kambar follows Valmiki in part and Tulasi, Adhyatma Ramayana.

(b) There are differences in the details of the dream. In Kambar, two dreams are related by Trijata, one of the city being burnt and Mandodari dying with Ravana and the second of two lions and tigers driving away elephants and a peacock taking back their place, and the lamp being transferred from Ravana's palace to Vibhishana's. Sita requests her to go back, sleep and resume her dream. In Tulasi, Trijata relates only one dream of a monkey burning the city and all demons being killed, Ravana's throne being occupied by Vibhishana and lastly Sita going back to Rama.

The details of the dream are different in Valmiki and Adhyatma Ramayanas from the above. In Valmiki it is stated that it will be well for the demonesses to prostrate at the feet of Sita and beg for excuse and blessings.[95] In Adhyatma, Vibhaishana is shown as serving at Rama's feet with devotion.[96]

(c) Neither Kambar nor Tulasi nor Valmiki has mentioned any dream of Ravana before he enters the Ashoka garden, but in Adhyatma Ramayana, Ravana has a dream and he was all along having Rama in his heart and anxiously expecting his arrival for his own death.[97]

94. Adhyatma Ramayana (5-2-17, 18, 19)
95. Valmiki Ramayana (5-27)
96. Adhyatma Ramayana (5-2-53)
97. *Ibid.*, (5-2-15 to 17)

(d) The approach of Ravana to Sita is differently treated. In Valmiki, Ravana is 'blunt and roungh'. He begins:

> "Why dost though cover thy breasts and body at sight of me, O thou whose thighs are like the trunk of an elephant? I desire thee O Sita; look upon me with favour!"[98]

Kambar's Ravana approaches her in all humility never shown by him to anyone of the three worlds. He begins—

> "O Koil sweet of the slender waist, when wilt
> Thou look on me with ruth?"

etc. and pities not for himself but at the wastage of her youthfulness.

Tulasida's Ravana is also equally humble. He begins by saying:

> "Listen O wise and fair of face! Mandodari and all the other queens I will make your servants—I swear it—if you will look on me but once!"

Ravana of Adhyatma is also a little blunt and rough.

(e) The description of the conversation between Ravana and Sita is also different, the result, however, being the same. In Tulasi, the period of ultimatum is one month whereas in the other three it is two months.

(f) In Kambar, Ravana does not raise his sword over Sita, as he does in Tulasi Ramayan. In Valmiki and Adhyatma Ramayanas, there is no such action. Tulasidas makes Mandodari intervene.

(g) It is only in Kambar that Trijata is said to be the daughter of Vibhishana[99] and the cottage of Panchavati with Sita[100] inside is shifted to Ashoka Garden.

98. Valmiki Ramayana (5-20) 'Kamba Ramayanam — A Study' — V. V. S. Aiyar, p. 247.
99. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (5-6-22)
100. *Ibid.*, (5-6-24)

5. *Hanuman meeting Sita: the Ring*:

Kambar: When the demonesses are calmed down by Trijata Hanuman 'pronounces some spells' which make them fall asleep.[101] Sita weeps over her evil fate and thinks that death aolne will be the panacea. She says:

"But, sooth, will he admit again
One who has lived so long in this sinful land?

"I must have sought my death the moment when
Disgrace did come on me: do I expect
To open a path for me to heaven, that I
Extinguish not my life though stained with shame."[103]

She repents her action in forcing Rama to bring the golden deer and her hot words towards Lakshmana and says—

"* * * * Can e'er the earth
Hold me if even after this my life
I do not end?
And shall I live to have the finger of scorn
Pointed at me by women chaste and pure
As one who parted from her Lord and lived
In Rakshas lands? And then, ah wretched me!
When Ram shall have destroyed this race for e'er
And freed me from my prison, how shall I prove
My virtue uncorrupt, if he should say,
'Away, thou are not worthy of my love'?"[104]

Sita resolves to end her life to prove her chastity and finds the time to be very opportune.[105] She goes towards a jasmine creeper. Now comes down Hanuman, and with a mixed feeling of joy and despair and with folded hands introduces himself as the messenger from her Rama. He tells her about the big army of monkeys and says that the delay was only due to Rama's not knowing her whereabouts.

101. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (5-5-1)
102. *Ibid.*, (5-5-11)
103. *Ibid.*, (5-5-15)
104. *Ibid.*, (5-5-17, 19, 20)
105. *Ibid.*, (5-5-21)

Otherwise Lanka would have been destroyed long before. He requests her not to doubt him. Sita concludes from his behaviour that he cannot be a demon in disguise. Still she thinks:

"What matters it if he a Rakshasa be
Or god, or Vanar King? And let him come
With violence in his thoughts or truth he melts
My heart pronouncing soft my lord his name,
And sheds a ray of light in th' utter dark
Of my soul; is life a dearer gift? My heart
Goes out to him: His words are choice, and free
From guile: and tears flow free from his love—
While he does sob aloud: I'll therefore speak
To him."[106]

So deciding, Sita asks him who he is. Hanuman relates to her the meeting of Sugriva and Rama and the incidents that followed emphasising the prowess of Vali and his death by Rama, and how he was able to find her out and gives her a special message by her lord:

"He took me 'part and did entrust me, mother,
With a message for thine ear: his love, can it
E'er go in vain?"[107]

The words of Hanuman overwhelms the heart of Sita with hope and pathos. Her joy knows no bounds. Tears of happiness flow from her eyes like a stream. With trembling lips she asks for herself—

'Is life, in sooth, come back to me?'

and requests Hanuman to describe the form of her lord. Hanuman gives a picturesque description of Rama from head to foot.

Sita's heart melts like wax. Hanuman mentions six incidents in the life of Rama and Sita which they alone knew and were given to him by Rama as indications to be referred to Sita. And then he shows her Rama's signet ring bearing his name.[108] It was a 'philosopher's stone' to her. She felt like one 'getting mukti unearned' or

106. *Ibid.,* (5-5-27, 28)
107. *Ibid.,* (5-5-34)
108. *Ibid.,* (5-5-63)

'fallen from gyan to reality returned' or 'a barren woman who a child beget' or 'blind getting back eyesight', she takes the ring and presses it to her bosom and sets it upon her head and on her eyes. Then:

> "She wilted, cooled, burned, her breath did cease:
> Are revived anon.
> She'd bury her nose in it; now hug it close
> To her bosom; wiping off the clouding tears
> From her joyous eyes, would gaze so long at it;
> Would think to utter words but words would fail:
> With mounting frenzy she put it in her mouth!"[109]

To her it is an immortalising drug. Her doubts are fully cleared and hopes strengthened. She addresses him as her 'life-giving divine father and mother'[110] and says that by his act he has established his fame for all times. She blesses him:

> "O hero of the mountain chest! O thou who has lifted a heavy burden from off my heart! If I be one who knows not ill, if my heart be pure and conduct right, may my blessings never fail, may eternity be to thee like unto a day, and live thou for ever and for ever!"

Thus Sita makes Hanuman a Chiranjeevi. Then she asks him how her lord and his brother met him and how they came to know of her abduction by Ravana. He relates in detail the whole story from the golden deer to his fight over the sea and coming to Ashoka garden. Sita pines to think of the unbearable trouble caused to her lord. She wonders how Hanuman crossed the sea. He replies:

> "Just as those, mother, who meditate on the holy feet of thy Lord cross the endless ocean of Illusion, even so I crossed the black ocean stream with my feet."[112]

109. *Ibid.*, (5-5-66, 67)
110. *Ibid.*, (5-5-71)
111. *Ibid.*, (5-5-72)
112. *Ibid.*, (5-5-97)

He salutes her and shows her the gignatic form 'Vishwaroopa' in which he performed the feat of crossing the sea. His head touches the heaven and he has to bend lest the heaven itself should break. This surprises the gods. The stars appear like fire-flies hanging to his hairs. The Sun and the moon are undistinguishable from his ear rings.[113]

This engenders complete confidence in Sita, but feels frightened at the huge form and requests him to resume his original shape,[114] and says in praise:

"T were little if I say thou canst the earth
Uproot, and lift her with her stable hill,
Or take the hooded snake that bears the world
Aloft and make of it a plaything light
In thy hand! * * * *
* * * * Thy single prowess will suffice,
O long-armed hero, to extend the fame
Of Rama and his grace, and make them live
For untold ages green in the minds of men.

* * * *

Whenever I thought of Rakshasas might and power
I used to fear that Ram had none besides
To help him but his brother; but now that fear
Has left me quite, for what is Rakshas might
When he has such a hero for ally?"[115]

Sita feels fully satisfied and says :

"Even if death does come to me, I can
Now pass away in peace, for even now
I feel as if I'm from this loathsome prison
Released ",[116]

and believes that in no manner can her honour ever be questioned.

113. *Ibid.*, (5-9-101, 102)
114. *Ibid.*, (5-5-107)
115. *Ibid*, (5-5-109, 110, 112)
116. *Ibid.*, (5-5-113)

Hearing the praises Hanuman gets modest and submits—

> "O thou, chaste as Arundhati, more numerous than the sands of the sea are the Vanara leaders who serve Rāma. I am but a humble servant of those mighty chiefs, obeying the commands that they lay upon me. * * * * Vali's brother is there and Vali's son, and Mainda and Tumind and the fierce Kumuda (and very many other such leaders). They can lift this earth and even the other worlds from their foundations. And they are as obedient to Rama's will as his very arrows. What are these Rakshasas to them?"[117]

After restoring hope and courage in Sita, he feels like putting an end to her miseries immediately. He offers to carry her back to Rama and suggests in all humility that she squat on his shoulders.[118] He says that he had the strength to carry the whole of Lanka on one hand fighting down the demons with the other. He will not be satisfied by just telling Rama of her whereabouts and conditions without making a present of herself to him. Should she so bid him, he will kill all the demons of Lanka and then take up the easy task of carrying her to Rama.[119] He further puts it that if he carries her back, Rama can later come to Lanka and easily kill all the trouble-some and sinful demons and rid the earth of its miseries. He requests her to let him have the fortune of carrying her back to Rama and bows low for her to mount upon his shoulders.[120] Sita is greatly touched by his words born of sincerity. She thinks that such an act is not impossible for him, but says:

> " 'Tis not proper for,
> Methinks, in my artless feminity
> Of scanty sense."[121]

117. *Ibid.*, (5-5-114 to 117)
118. *Ibid.*, (5-6-3)
119. *Ibid.*, (5-6-8)
120. *Ibid.*, (5-6-10)
121. *Ibid.*. (5-6-12)

She gently convinces him by her arguments, that such an action will tarnish the mighty victories of Rama's bow. She says:

"Unless in th' war to come, my liege, the Ram—
His bowmanship to the worlds—
Does feed to crows the eyes of him that dared
To look on me, shall I yet live?"[122]

About herself she says that by curse she can burn not only Lanka but entire worlds which are boundless but she would not, for it may belittle the greatness of her lord and his bow.[123] Above all she says:

"One more there is to say Oh list, true one!
For bar the body of my knight, e'en you
With senses five contained, or any male,
So named could this form touch? '[124]

Continuing she says that, had Ravana touched her, she would have ended her life then and there and that Ravana had carried her with the cottage and the ground underneath without touching her,[125] and that is just to prove the efficacy of chastity that she lives. Hanuman is now convinced that Sita is right and not he.

Tulasi: When all the demonesses leave the place, Sita thinks of the time-limit and requests Trijata with folded hands to tell her a way to end her life, for the pangs of separation have become unbearable.[126] She wants her to put up a pyre for her, so that her love of Rama may be proved and she may be spared from hearing the hard piercing words of Ravana.[127] Trijata holds her feet and begs her to desist from doing any such act. She mentions the great strength and glory of her lord. She could not moreover procure fire at night. After consoling Sita she leaves for her house.[128] Sita

122. *Ibid.*, (5-6-15)
123. *Ibid.*, (5-6-18)
124. *Ibid.*, (5-6-19)
125. *Ibid.*, (5-6-24)
126. Ram Charit Manas (5-12-1)
127. *Ibid.*, (5-12-5)
128. *Ibid.*, (5-12-3)

feels disappointed at not getting fire. She finds fire in the sky but not one would come down for her help. She then asks the Ashoka tree (tree with no grief) to justify its name and relieve her of grief.[129] She begs of the tender shoots that look like fire, to give her fire. Each moment of Sita's misery is an aeon to Hanuman. Now:

> "The monkey pondered awhile and then threw down the ring as though the Ashoka tree had dropped a spark. Joyfully she arose and picked it up."[130]

Sita sees the heart-touching ring beautifully inscribed with Rama's name and immediately recognises it with surprise.[131] Her heart throbs with joy and grief. She believes that it cannot be created by any one even by magic. Several thoughts cross her mind. Now speaks Hanuman in a sweet tone of the great qualities of Rama, hearing which all the grief of Sita flies away'.[132] Hanuman introduces himself as the messenger of Rama to 'Mother Janaki', swearing by Rama's name, and says, 'How he got the ring and how the monkeys became friends with Rama.'[133] Sita gets confident in Hanuman being a servant of Rama in thought, word and deed.[134] She is filled with tender feelings towards him and feels as if she is saved from drowing. She asks him about the welfare of her lord and his brother and the reason for his being so hard-hearted. He says that Rama loves her twice as much as ever, that his heart is ever with her and that his sorrow is unbearable. She forgets herself for a moment. Hanuman asks her to keep up courage and leave off fear and sorrow thinking of Rama, the bestower of all happiness, and to take it that all the demons will be killed in the fire of Rama's arrows. The delay in her being traced is due to the absence of information as to her whereabouts and adds:

> "This very moment, mother, would I take you hence, but—I swear it by Rama—the Lord does not will it so."[135]

129. *Ibid.*, (5-12-5)
130. *Ibid.*, (5-12)
131. *Ibid.*, (5-13-1)
132. *Ibid.*, (5-13-3)
133. *Ibid.*, (5-13-5, 6)
134. *Ibid.*, (5-13)
135. *Ibid.*, (5-16-2)

He assures her that Rama will certainly come with the army of monkeys, kill all the demons and take her back and consequently Narada and other sages will sing his praise. Sita says:

> "My son, the monkeys are all like you, but the demons are warriors exceedingly strong; and so I greatly doubt the issue."[136]

Hearing the words of Sita, Hanuman revealed his form 'like a mountain of gold, terrible in war and of mighty valiance'. Sita is then convinced and he resumes his former tiny form, and says that a small snake can swallow a vulture by the grace of the Lord. Then she feels happy and blesses him to be ever youthful and immortal.[137] Hanuman's heart is overwhelmed with joy. He tells her about his extreme hunger and requests her to permit him to feast upon the sweet fruits of the garden. Sita warns him of the very strong demons, but he fears them not. Seeing his wisdom, strength and cleverness Sita tells him to eat the luscious fruits having the feet of Rama at heart.[138]

In this scene there are differences in the story and details of incidents. Valmiki's Sita goes to the extent of doubting Hanuman as Ravana, as also in the Adhyatma. In both the Sanskrit works, Hanuman is made to relate the whole of Rama's life beginning right from his birth as son of Dasharatha. In Valmiki, Hanuman relates the earlier story thrice. In Valmiki and Adhyatma Ramayanas the ring is offered direct by Hanuman to Sita. Valmiki's Hanuman offers to carry Sita to Rama from there immediately but not so in Adhyatma Ramayana. The salient points are as under :

(a) In Kambar, Hanuman 'pronounces some spells' to make the demonesses sleep. Sita takes the opportunity to try to commit suicide and goes to the jasmine creeper. At this moment Hanuman gives the ring. In Tulasi, the demonesses including Trijata leave the place when Hanuman drops the ring from the Ashoka tree. According to Valmiki all the demonesses including Trijata are near Sita herself, when Hanuman begins relating the story of Rama from the tree

136. *Ibid.*, (5-16-3, 4)
137. *Ibid.*, (5-17-2)
138. *Ibid.*, (5-17)

top,[139] whereas according to Adhyatma Ramayana all the demonesses go to sleep after the advice of Trijata, when Hanuman begins the story.

(b) Valmiki and Adhyatma Ramayanas say that Sita thinks of committing suicide by tying her tuft round her neck and hanging from the tree. In Kambar, Sita goes to tie the jasmine creeper round her neck and hang, whereas in Tulasi, Sita asks Trijata for fire and a pyre which she declines to give. Then Sita asks the Aṣhoka tree for the same when Hanuman drops the ring.

(c) On first sight of Hanuman according to Valmiki and Adhyatma Ramayanas, Sita suspects him to be Ravana in disguise. In Kambar, Hanuman's sincere behaviour and faithful words create confidence in her and she would speak to him even if he were a demon. Her heart melts at his words. In Tualsidas the ring with Rama's name makes Sita believe in Hanuman completely. She sees confirmation of belief in his thought, word and deed.

(d) Kambar's Hanuman begins his story from the golden deer and does not dwell on the earlier part. Tulasidas says that Sita listened to 'the whole story' from Hanuman. In Valmiki and Adhyatma Ramayanas, the story from the birth of Rama to Hanuman's seeing Sita is related.

(e) Kambar following Valmiki gives through Hanuman a detailed and picturesque description of Rama's personality from head to foot in his own inimitable way. This is not found in Tulasidas or in Adhyatma Ramayana.

(f) It is only Kambar's Hanuman that refers to the six incidents mentioned by Rama known to Sita alone at the end.

(g) The signet ring is dropped by Hanuman from the Ashoka tree in Tulasidas, and Sita picks it up. In Kambar, Hanuman hands it out and Sita takes it, without her hand coming under, as it should not. In Valmiki and Adhyatma Ramayanas, he offers the ring and she receives it in the usual way.

139. Valmiki Ramayana (5-30, 31)

(h) The description of the effect on Sita of the sight of the ring is different in the several Ramayanas. In Kambar, it is to Sita a 'philosopher's stone' and she feels like getting 'mukthi unearned' or 'fallen from gyan to reality returned' or 'a barren woman begetting a child' or 'a blind getting back eyesight'. It is an immortalising drug and she blesses Hanuman with immortality. In Tulasi, Sita at first takes it to be a spark of fire and then discovers with astonishment to be the ring. It makes her heart throb with joy and grief. In Valmiki, Sita feels as if her lord himself is come and her relief is like that of the Sun released from the Serpent Rahu's grip. In Adhyatma Ramayana, she feels extremely happy and sheds tears of joy calling Hanuman as her life-giver.

(i) In Kamba Ramayanam, Hanuman shows his 'Vishwaroopa' to Sita when she asks him how he crossed the Sea. She gets frightened and asks him to resume his normal form. He adds that there are mightier vanaras but equally obedient to Rama. In Tulasi Ramayan he shows the Vishwaroopa when Sita says that the demons are warriors exceedingly strong and doubts the ability of the monkeys so small and weak like him. In Valmiki Ramayana, it is when Sita wonders how Hanuman with so small a body could carry her back to Rama. In the Adhyatma Ramayana no mention of the Vishwaroopa is made. However, when Sita asks how Rama with the forces of monkeys will cross the sea, he says that he himself will carry Rama and Lakshmana on his shoulders and fly across the sea, and all the other monkeys will do likewise through the air in no time.

(j) In Kambar, after the Vishwaroopa, Hanuman offers to carry Sita back to Rama. In Tulasidas there is no such offer but Hanuman says that he can certainly carry her across to Rama. In Valmiki, Hanuman's offer precedes his Vishwaroopa. Adhyatma Ramayana has not made any mention of the proposal.

6. *Sita's Message and the Choodamani:*

Kambar: Asked by Hanuman what he should say to Rama, Sita tells him that she will be alive for not more than a month and that the same be conveyed to her lord as a word sworn on his

own name, that it is also 'his duty plain to save his valour fame'[140] and that of Lakshmana too, that Rama may perform her obsequies, should he not be able to rescue her within the month's time[141] but wants him to be reminded of the solemn words given to her at the time of their marriage that 'not even in thought will I touch a second woman in my life'. She asks for but one boon :

"Even if I stay and end my life down here,
Let it be granted me to be reborn
And gain the blessing rare which ends all sin—
To touch his form divine."[142]

She expresses her reverences to all the three mothers-in-law. In a pessimistic and pathetic note she says—

"The while he rules enthroned, or rides in state
The haltered elephant with bells of choice,
Or his resplendent aspects manifold,
On avenues to see I am not blest.
Of what avail is it to speak of them?
Let me on my past Karma dwell."[143]

A natural feminine taunt comes out from Sita i.e., that to rescue her is not so important to Rama as certain other duties. She says with a melting heart:

" To the world sore lanugishing for him so long,
At his mother's grief and at distress which Bharat
Endures he'll speed. To me in agony
Down here, how would he come?"[144]

She adds that her reverences to her father and mother may also be conveyed, and that Sugriva, the monkey King may be requested to

140. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (5-6-30)
141. *Ibid.*, (5-6-32)
142. *Ibid.*, (5-6-36)
143. *Ibid.*, (5-6-36)
144. *Ibid*, (5-6-37)

take Rama safe to Ayodhya and get him crowned as king.[145] Hanuman is greatly moved. He consoles her offering hope that the end of Ravana and all the demons is certainly approaching fast, and that her return to her lord is a question of days only. Like a sagacious ambassador Hanuman says:

> "Benignant Lady! If we not even at the risk of our lives kill outright all the enemies who have disturbed your peace, and if my lord too were to fail to achieve a victory, the stigma attached to our valour would never be effaced."[146]

He also reminds her of the word given by Rama to the sages to slay the demons by which Rama was bound to kill them, failing which the common people and the learned were sure to look down upon him. Her imprisonment is but an excuse for exterminating the demons.[147] He promises to bring Rama in much shorter a period, and requests her to keep up courage. He stresses the extreme distress felt by Rama himself. Hanuman concludes:

> "Within that day you have now said to me
> If he does not deliver you from durance vile,
> O dame of fragrant locks, let infamy
> Unutterable and Sin envelope him.
> Thence Ravana is he o'er there and he
> Here now is truly Ram."[148]

The words of Hanuman help to give her hope. She now discloses certain secrets which Rama alone knows, to be carried to him as evidence of Hanuman having really met Sita. Sita asks him to whisper to her Lord—

> "Once on the mountain side where elephants
> Do range, a raven came and clawed me sore
> With cruel toes, and lo, in fiery rage,
> He took a blade of grass that lay at hand,
> And one relentless dart he sped.[149]

145. *Ibid.*, (5-6-38)
146. *Ibid.*, (5-6-42)
147. *Ibid.*, (5-6-60) (Trn. C. P. Venkatarama Aiyar, 'Kamban and his Art'—p. 76).
148. *Ibid.*, (5-6-74)
149. *Ibid.*, (5-6-77)

"Recount how Jayantha, the lustful crow—
Devender's son—to Shiv and all gods
Besides in terror flew, and each in turn
Asylum barred; and all with one accord
Cried: 'Fall, fall at his lotus feet
And refuge gain!"[150]

Her lord was content with taking away one eye of the wicked raven. She then recalls another incident in which when prior to the day fixed for the coronation,[151] Rama suggested that her parrot be named after Kaikeyi. Then Sita takes out the Choodamani, the head-ornament, from a knot in her saree. It illuminates the seven worlds and makes the demons of Lanka feel like the sun rising, and even the lotuses get blossomed.[152] Hanuman looks at it with immense wonder. Sita hands it over to him as an insignia for her lord.[153] Hanuman bows to Sita, receives it, preserves it well, goes round Sita thrice and prostrates before her. Sita with due praises gives him leave, and Hanuman makes a move.[154]

Tulasi: Sita blesses Hanuman after receiving the ring and hearing the message of Rama. Now Hanuman feels hungry and requests Sita to permit him to feast upon the delicious fruits of the Ashoka garden.[155] While permitting, Sita warns him about the very strong watch-demons, great fighters wandering at night. Hanuman leaves the place. Sita does not give the Choodamani now, but on Hanuman's return after burning Lanka. Sita wants him to tell her lord her reverences and says:

"Recall to him, the story of Indra's son and remind my Lord of the might of his arrows. If my Lord come not within one month, he will not find me alive."[156]

150. *Ibid.*, (5-6-78)
151. *Ibid.*, (5-6-83)
152. *Ibid.*, (5-6-86)
153. *Ibid.*, (5-6-88)
154. *Ibid*, (5-6-89)
155. Ram Charit Manas (5-17-4)
156. *Ibid.*, (5-27-3)

Hanuman after consoling her in various ways, bows at her feet and sets off to Rama.[157]

In Valmiki, Sita points out the impropriety of his carrying her. Hanuman asks for some token. She relates the story of Jayanta and questions why Rama should excuse one who has actually snatched her away from his hands, and adds that, on Rama's permission, Lakshmana at least can rescue her. She stipulates the time-limit of one month, and then gives the Choodamani which was tied in her saree. Hanuman ties it in his finger. He bows to Sita and goes round her. He assures her of the approaching happy days within the time-limit. Sita gives one more incident of Rama putting a mark on her cheek seeing no 'Tilak' mark on the forehead.[158] Hanuman again encourages her and leaves the place with the Choodamani. Sita blesses him.

Adhyatma Ramayana has practically followed Valmiki Ramayana. Hanuman says that Rama and Lakshmana will cross the sea on his shoulders and burn Ravana and his forces to ashes, and requests Sita for an insignia of hers to be given to Rama. She takes out the Choodamani from her hair[159] and gives it to him saying that Rama and Lakshmana will certainly believe his meeting Sita after seeing the same. Then she relates the story of Jayanta, the son of Indra, in the form of a crow injuring her feet and Rama's arrow of a grass blade taking away one of his eyes. She adds that such a Rama is now forgetting to rescue her from the prison. It is here that Hanuman shows his Vishwaroopa to Sita. Then he takes her permission to eat fruits and goes into the garden.

This is an important scene in point of deviations from the original story and details. On a comparative study we find that—

(a) When Hanuman wants from Sita a message for Rama, Kambar's Sita strikes a very pessimistic and pathetic note with a feminine taunt and Hanuman infuses hope and courage in her and she gets somewhat consoled. This happens before the Choodamani is

157. *Ibid.*, (5-27)
158. Valmiki Ramayana (5-40)
159. Adhyatma Ramayana (5-3-52)

given. In Valmiki, Adhyatma and Tulasi Ramayanas this touching and detailed dialogue is absent and straightway Choodamani is given.

(b) In Kambar, Valmiki and Adhyatma Ramayanas Choodamani is given to Hanuman before he destroys the Ashoka garden and the burning of Lanka. But in Tulasidas it is when Hanuman is about to return to Rama after burning Lanka.

(c) The story of the raven Jayanta is not related by Tulasidas as in Kambar and the two Sanskrit works, but Sita just says that Hanuman may recall to Rama 'the story of Indra's son and remind him of his might'.

(d) In Kambar, Sita recalls the two incidents and then gives the Choodamani, whereas in Tulasi, Sita first gives the Choodamani and then indicates one incident (of Jayanta). Kambar appears to have followed Valmiki substituting Rama's naming the parrot after Kaikeyi, for putting a mark on her cheek. Adhyatma Ramayana has followed Valmiki but leaves out the second incident.

(e) In Kambar and Valmiki, Sita has the Choodamani tied in her saree but in Adhyatma Ramayana on her plaited hair. Tulasidas does not say where from Sita takes it out.

(f) In Kambar, Hanuman goes round Sita thrice in devotional homage and prostrates before her. This is not stated in the three other works.

7. *Hanuman in Bonds:*

Kambar: While coming away from Sita with the Choodamani, Hanuman thinks of leaving some mark of his visit there. Besides, he feels like paying Ravana in his own coin by carrying away Mandodari.[160] He wants to have a fight with the demons just to indicate the prowess of Rama. He detsroys the Ashoka garden uprooting trees, whirling them round and throwing them up to reach the

160. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (5-7-5)

land of gods.[161] Some fall on the houses of the demons like thunderbolts. Houses are broken. The sun rises and after destroying all the trees, Hanuman stands alone in a gigantic form. The demonesses see him and inform Sita. She mentally repents having insisted on Lakshmana to go for Rama's rescue at Panchavati. She tells them that she knows nothing about him.[162] The demonesses are terrified and run away. Then he uproots a hill and throws it over Lanka. The seasonal gods hurry to Ravana and inform him. Ravana just laughs at them. Hanuman roars so as to be heard by Ravana who orders the strong 'kinkara' demons to bring him bound. They sorround him with an army. Hanuman is happy at the turn of events and uproots a big tree. A battle ensues and the kinkaras fall dead.[163] The garden guards inform Ravana who sends Jambumali. He is greatly pleased at his selection, and takes armies of rathas, elephants, horses and pedestrians with various weapons. Hanuman feels happy. The forces of Jambumali are destroyed and Jambumali is also killed by Hanuman.[164] Ravana thinks of himself going but his Five Commanders volunteer themselves. Their bigger armies are destroyed by Hanuman and then the five commanders also one by one.[165] Now Akshakumara, Ravana's younger son, with a suitable army of all forces, swears that he will not only kill this monkey but finish off all monkeys of the three worlds.[166] His army is wiped out by Hanuman and he also falls dead.[167] Mandodari falls wailing at Ravana's feet. Indrajit, Ravana's elder son, gets furious and accuses his father for not gauging the strength of Hanuman properly before sending Akshakumara. He states that the father himself is the cause of the death of his own son,[168] and starts with a very big army, assuring Ravana that he would bring Hanuman in bonds. He praises the valour of Hanuman.[169]

161. *Ibid.*, (5-7-11)
162. *Ibid.*, (5-7-48)
163. *Ibid.*, (5-8-53)
164. *Ibid.*, (5-9-47)
165. *Ibid.*, (5-10-64)
166. *Ibid.*, (5-11-23)
167. *Ibid.*, (5-11-38)
168. *Ibid.*, (5-12-9)
169. *Ibid.*, (5-12-15)

Heaps of corpses are found every where and the sight of his brother Akshakumara kindles his anger and grief. He wails:

> "Alas 'tis not my brother lying dead—
> It is my father's glory faded lies
> Upon the ground."[170]

Hanuman thinks that if he killed Indrajit, Ravana may release Sita and that the other demons also may abstain from committing evil deeds.[171] He destroys Indrajit's army with little difficulty leaving himself practically unhurt. Indrajit in great anger sends arrows on Hanuman who assumes so great a form by the power of his Yoga that Indrajit feels astonished.[172] Hanuman kills the horses of his chariot and the driver. Indrajit gets into another chariot. Hanuman breaks his bow[173] and Indrajit takes out a superior bow and sends shafts after shafts over Hanuman tiring him a little, but Hanuman uproots a tree and strikes with it on the head of Indrajit. Once he throws his chariot away with Indrajit.[174] The fallen Indrajit rises into the sky, while Hanuman destroys all his chariots etc. At last Indrajit shoots the fierce Brahmastra on Hanuman. Like a serpent it goes and binds Hanuman's shoulders.[175] Indrajit feels victorious and the demons are happy to see Hanuman tied down by Brahmastra. Hanuman is dragged into the streets of Lanka by the demons. Hanuman thinks that it would be better to see Ravana before leaving Lanka,[176] though he could easily escape from the bonds to which he had to submit as per Brahma's ordinance in his youth. He hopes that Ravana may release Sita after talk with him,[177] or that he might get to know of Ravana, his ministers and commanders and of their views.[178] Ravana wants Hanuman to be brought alive.[179] Sita hears of the news from Trijata and wonders how he who crossed the sea in his Vishwaroopa came to be caught by the demons.

170. *Ibid.*, (5-12-5)
171. *Ibid.*, (5-12-26)
172. *Ibid.*, (5-12-42)
173. *Ibid.*, (5-12-44)
174. *Ibid.*, (5-12-51)
175. *Ibid.*, (5-12-57)
176. *Ibid.*, (5-13-19)
177. *Ibid.*, (5-13-21)
178. *Ibid.*, (5-13-22)
179. *Ibid.*, (5-13-28)

She feels that Hanuman has only added to her suffering[180] by holding out hopes, probably vain, of early rescue. She falls unconscious.[181] Hanuman is taken before Ravana seated in all his majesty as the supreme ruler of the three worlds with crowns on his ten heads like a big black ocean with the Sumeru (golden) mountain above it. His very sight evokes terrible anger in Hanuman[182] and he thinks of killing him at once, but he calms down with the thought that Rama alone can kill him.[183] He also recalls Rama's vow to sever all the heads of Ravana and that it may be improper on his part to do so.[184] He also feels that Ravana may be too strong for him, and that, should he take to fighting with him, the time-limit may lapse and bring forth Sita's end. He gives up the idea and constitutes himself as Rama's ambasador. Indrajit with folded hands shows him to his father saying that he is Vishnu in monkey's form and that he possesses the strength of Shiva and Vishnu.[185] Ravana looks at Hanuman with extreme rage.[186]

Tulasi: Hanuman begins eating the delicious fruits of the Ashoka garden. Some of the demon keepers of the garden are killed and others run off to Ravana and report the matter.[187] He sends an army of warriors who are killed by Hanuman.[188] Then Ravana sends Prince Akshaya with a very big army. Hanuman takes a tree and kills Akshaya as if in sport[189] and shout aloud. Ravana gets intensely angry and sends Meghnad (Indrajit) the strong, asking him not to kill but bring the monkey in bonds. Indrajit goes with innumerable forces. Hanuman uproots a very big tree and destroys Indrajit's chariot and kills all his warriors. Hanuman and Indrajit are left single like two elephants. Hanuman gives a hard fist to Indrajit making him unconscious for a moment. Then Indrajit sends the Brahmastra on Hanuman who submits to getting bound by it in honour

180. *Ibid.*, (5-13-33)
181. *Ibid.*, (5-13-36)
182. *Ibid.*, (5-13-55)
183. *Ibid.*, (5-13-61)
184. *Ibid.*, (5-13-63)
185. *Ibid.*, (5-13-67)
186. *Ibid.*, (5-13-68)
187. Ram Charit Manas (5-18-1)
188. *Ibid.*, (5-18-3)
189. *Ibid.*, (5-18-4)

of the greatness of the celestial weapon,[190] and falls unconscious. Indrajit takes him to Ravana. Hanuman sees the court of Ravana in all its majesty with untold grandeur and gods and kings in attendance. Hanuman stands care-free. Ravana laughs and jeers at him.

In this scene Kambar follows Valmiki very closely except for details of persons and incidents. Valmiki includes the death of the seven sons of the ministers by Hanuman.[191] So also in Adhyatma Ramayana[192] wherein Ravana asks Indrajit to bring Hanuman dead or alive.[193] Here the Brahmastra just touches and leaves him, and Hanuman comes tied by ropes only to get an opportunity for doing some mischief. The noteworthy features are—

(a) Reference to Sita is made by Kambar, Valmiki,[194] and Adhyatma[195] Ramayanas but not by Tulasidas.

(b) Tulasidas has not mentioned the death of Kinkaras, Jambumali, the seven sons of ministers and the five commanders as done by Valmiki and Adhyatma. Kambar omits only the death of the seven sons of the ministers.

(c) The description of the details of the armies which come upon Hanuman and of the battles are extensive in Kambar as in Valmiki whereas it is very brief in Tulasi and Adhyatma Ramayanas.

What we have in 420 stanzas[196] in Kambar (in six and a half chapters) is covered in fifteen and a half stanzas[197] by Tulasidas.

(d) The wailing of Mandodari over the death of Akshayakumara is described by Kambar alone.

190. *Ibid.*, (5-19)
191. Valmiki Ramayana (5-45)
192. Adhyatma Ramayana (5-3-84)
193. *Ibid.*, (5-3-90)
194. Valmiki Ramayana (5-46)
195. Adhyatma Ramayana (5-3-74)
196. Kamba Ramayanam (5-7-1 to (5-13-68)
197. Ram Charit Manas (5-18-1) to (5-20)

(e) In Kambar and Tulasidas, Ravana wants Hanuman to be brought to him alive. Valmiki is silent on this. In Adhyatma Ramayana, Ravana states that he may be brought alive or dead.

(f) In Kambar, Trijata informs Sita of Hanuman being bound by Indrajit's Brahmastra and Sita becomes sad. This is not found in Tulasi or Valmiki or Adhyatma Ramayana.

8. *Conflagration of Lanka*:

Kambar: Ravana asks Hanuman —

"Art thou Narayana, or wielder fierce,
Of the thunderbolt, or he of the triple lance?
Or Brahma? or the cobra bearing high
The earth?

* * * *

Thou must be one of them in disguise come!"[198]

Ravana suspects him to be Vishnu, Indra, Shiva, Brahma or the Seshanag. He even feels that Hanuman may be the death-god himself or Lord Muruha or Agastya,[199] or any other fearless god. He asks him who he is, and the cause for his arrival. Hanuman gives a ready reply—

"I'm none of those that thou hast named even now:
Nor do I serve such puny beings as these.
Know me as messenger of Him whose eyes
Are even as the blood-red lotus, who
Stands pledged to save from bonds of ill and good
Rishis and Gods and e'en the Three Supreme....[200]

"He is the God Supreme, th' embodiment
Of Dharma Itself, whose nature absolute
Even the Vedas have not power to sound;[201]

198. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (5-13-70)
199. *Ibid.*, (5-13-71)
200. *Ibid.*, (5-13-74, 75)
201. *Ibid.*, (5-13-78)

Who in the hoary ages past came down
To save the elephant who called aloud
O Lord Supreme, I trust myself to thee.[202]

"Know that the Ultimate Cause that has no first
Or last or middle, or time or measure that bounds,
Has thrown away the lance and disk and pot
And armed itself with bow and murd'rous dart,
And leaving sea and flower, and Silver Hill
Has come to show itself in fair Ayodh."[203]

Continuing he says that Rama's incarnation is for establishing righteousness and eradicating evil from this earth, and that with Angada, the son of Vali, he has come in search of Sita and is now there as the ambassador of Angada.[204] Ravana enquires about the welfare of Vali and gets to know of his death by Rama himself. Then he asks where Rama is and how the search was conducted. Hanuman tells him of Rama's friendship with Sugriva and of their readiness for action. Ravana asks for the reason for his violent acts having come as an ambassador, assuring him that he will not be killed as he is an ambassador.[205] Hanuman only advises him to leave his evil deeds and release Sita, for ultimately good alone will succeed and evil is sure to be defeated. Ravana grows indignant at his gratuitous advice, and again wants to know the cause of his taking to violence being an ambassador. Hanuman says that, as there were none coming forward to show Ravana to him, he destroyed the Ashoka garden, and then when he found the demons trying to kill him without understanding his object, he had to pay them in the same coin. Ravana at this answer turns wild and orders Hanuman to be put to death but Vibhishana interferes and points out that Hanuman is in the role of a messenger and Ravana, the King, is a descendant of Brahma himself.[206] He says:

"We have heard of kings putting even women to death but never yet have we heard of princes killing ambassadors.

202. *Ibid.*, (5-13-79)
203. *Ibid.*, (5-13-80)
204. *Ibid*, (5-13-82)
205. *Ibid.*, (5-13-89)
206. *Ibid.*, (5-13-110 to 112)

> Even the gods will mock at us if we stoop to this sacrilege. ....Did not even the Men desist from killing our sister?"[207]

He insists that he must never be killed but allowed to go back and tell what he has found in Lanka. Ravana gives in, but considers that some punishment is necessary. He orders his tail to be set in flames, and he be taken round the city before he is sent back. He asks Hanuman to bring Rama and Lakshmana soon before him.[208] Indrajit releases Hanuman from the Brahmastra and he is tied with all the available ropes including those of elephants, horses etc., and dragged out to the gates of the palace of Ravana. Hanuman feels happy and lets the demons do as they please.[209] The demons drench his long tail with ghee and oil after wrapping it with all available clothes and set fire to it on all sides. Numerous demons assemble there and invite others by the beating of drums. Sita hears of this and falls down, sobbing in extreme distress. She prays to the god of fire:

> "You are kind to all without exception even as a mother is towards her children. Could you not therefore lend a helping hand in the extermination of the Rakshasa hounds? You are the one great witness of all that goes on in this vast universe. Hence you know whether I am of a spotless character or not. And as I am a chaste lady I implore you not to burn him."[210]

Instantly the fire gets cooled to Hanuman alone. He is astonished and understands that it is due to the power of Sita's chastity.[211] The demons take him all round Lanka and then he suddenly rises up suspending in the air the two lakhs of hands with the rope. They fall to the ground. Hanuman extends his long and strong tail over Lanka. It looks like Shiva's third eye out to end the universe. Hanuman jumps from house to house burning the whole city. The

207. *Ibid.,* (5-13-113, 116)
208. *Ibid.,* (5-13-117)
209. *Ibid.,* (5-13--121, 122)
210. Ibid., (5-13-127) (Trn. by Sri C. P. Venkatarama Aiyer)
211. *Ibid.,* (5-13-131)

palaces are on flames. The women shreak in terror and distress. Their hair gets burnt. The dresses turn to ashes. The city is engulfed in smoke. The elephants, horses, buffalloes and women are burnt. The women run and fall into the sea with their children and relations. Even the fish in the sorrounding sea die of the heat of the conflagration. All the gold of Lanka gets melted, and also weapons. The gardens are reduced to ashes. The heat reaches the moon and the sun.[212] Ravana's palace-flames emit the smell of sweet scents far and wide.[213] Ravana asks for the cause, get furious and feels ashamed to think that the gods will laugh, should they come to know this.[214] He orders the god of fire and Hanuman to be caught and brought before him.[215] The demons run after Hanuman but are crushed to death by his tail. Then Hanuman puts out the fire on his tail by dipping it in the sea and the demons who were then hiding in the sea also die. The Vidyadharas who were flying in the sky, tell Hanuman about the safety of Ashoka Garden.[216] Hearing this happy news he goes to Sita and bows before her feet.[217] Sita feels greatly pleased and comforted. Hanuman sets off towards Rama.[218] The god of fire hides himself due to fear.[219]

Tulasi: Ravana asks Hanuman who he is, why he destroyed the gardens and the demons and how he had no fear of life. Hanuman replies—

> "Hearken, Ravana; he by whose might illusion fashions every universe, he, O ten-headed, by whose power Brahma creates, Hari preserves and Shiva destroys; he by whose strength the thousand-headed Sesha supports the Universes with all its hills and forests on his head; he who takes various forms for the protection of the gods and teaches fools like you a lesson; he who broke the unyielding bow of Hara, and thereby crushed the pride of all those princes; he who

212. *Ibid.*, (5-14-21, 22)
213. *Ibid.*, (5-14-40)
214. *Ibid.*, (5-14-46)
215. *Ibid.*, (5-14-47, 48)
216. *Ibid.*, (5-14-61)
217. *Ibid.*, (5-14-62)
218. *Ibid.*, (5-14-63)
219. *Ibid.*, (5-14-64)

> slew Khara, Dushana, Trishira and Bali, all champions of unequalled valour; he by virtue of the smallest fraction of whose might you yourself vanquished all created things—he it is whose messenegr I am ; and he it is whose beloved bride you have stolen away. Oh yes, I've heard of your wonderful exploits—your fight with Sahasrabahu and the glory you won in your battle with Bali!"[220]

Ravana laughs at the monkey's words. Now says Hanuman that he ate the fruits just to satisfy his hunger and broke certain trees as per his own nature, and that the brutal demons began beating him. He justifies himself by saying that he killed only those who tried to kill him.[221] He does not feel ashamed at that, for he only did the work of his master. He begins advising Ravana to release Sita and not to purchase enmity with Rama who is feared even by death.[222] He assures him that Rama is all merciful and will certainly excuse him, should he go and fall at his lotus feet, so that he may continue to reign over Lanka. He also warns him that if he opposes Rama, there will be no escape for him anywhere and even a thousand Shankaras, Vishnus or Brahmas cannot save him.[223] His good words are in vain and the arrogant Ravana says in mockery that he has got a very good teacher in a monkey and that he feared death was round the corner. He orders instant assasination of Hanuman when Vibhishana with his ministers[224] humbly says:

> "Slay not envoy, Sire; it were contrary to diplomatic usage: give him some other punishment."[225]

The ministers agree and Ravana says that the monkey may be sent with a limb cut and orders:

> "A monkey prides himself upon his tail; I bid you all steep cloth in oil and bind it on his tail and then set fire to it.

220. Ram Charit Manas (5-21-2 to 5-22-1)
221. *Ibid.*, (5-22-3)
222. *Ibid.*, (5-22-5)
223. *Ibid.*, (5-23-4)
224. *Ibid.*. (5-24-3)
225. *Ibid.*, (5-24-4)

> When the tailless monkey goes off home, the fool will bring back his master; then let me see what power he has of whose greatness he has made such boast! "[226]

Hanuman sees with pleasure the helping hand of Saraswati, the goddess of learning in Ravana's order. The demons with all available clothes and ghee and oil tie over and soak the tail which goes on lengthening.[227] Those who came to see the fun begin beating Hanuman jeering at him. The monkey is taken round the whole city to the accompaniment of the beating of drums. Hanuman assumes a very small form and jumps out of the bondage and climbs over a golden building terrifying all demons and demonesses.[228] He laughs at the pitch of his voice and roars. The fire becomes so huge that it reaches the sky. He jumps from house to house setting fire to the whole of Lanka and making the people uneasy. All cry that it is not a monkey but some god in that form.[229] In a moment the whole city is in flames except the solitary house of Vibhishana.[230] Hanuman also is not affected by the fire, for he is His messenger who created fire.[231] He then extinguishes the fire on his tail in the sea, assumes his original form and goes to Sita for some insignia and message to Rama.

The story of this scene is practically same in all the four works but details are different. In Valmiki, Ravana at the sight of Hanuman suspects him to be Nandi who cursed him at Kailash for laughing, or Banasura. Hanuman is first anxious about Sita but then assures himself that fire cannot burn fire, for Sita is nothing less than fire by virtue of her chastity. After seeing Sita he gets over the Arishtha mountain. Here as well as in Adhyatma Ramayana, it is Prahastha who questions Hanuman about his identity etc., and not Ravana direct. In Adhyatma, Hanuman's advice to Ravana is very long and philosophical like that of a great religious teacher. Ravana wants to kill him and Sita immediately and later Rama and Lakshmana with Sugriva and his forces. Here also mention has

226. *Ibid.*, (5-24; 5-25-1)
227. *Ibid.*, (5-25-3)
228. *Ibid.*, (5-25-5)
229. *Ibid.*, (5-26-2)
230. *Ibid.*, (5-26-3)
231. *Ibid.*, (5-26-4)

been made about the fire not affecting the house of Vibhishana.[232] Hanuman takes leave of Sita. She wants to hear about Rama, and Hanuman offers to carry her on his shoulders to Rama in no time.[233] Sita declines. Hanuman leaves Lanka.

Some of the salient points to be noted are:

(a) Kambar and Tulasidas make Ravana talk to Hanuman directly, whereas in Valmiki and Adhyatma Ramayanas on the orders of Ravana it is Prahastha who questions Hanuman.

(b) Only in Kambar, Sita hears of the punishment meted out to hanuman and on the strength of her chastity she prays to the fire-god not to affect him, which is acceded to, thereby astonishing even Hanuman.

(c) Only in Kambar, Ravana enquires about the cause of the fire and then wants the god of fire and Hanuman to be caught and brought before him.

(d) In all the four works Hanuman goes to Sita before returning to Rama but only in Tulasidas, Hanuman receives the Choodamani and hears of the story of Jayanta from Sita at that time and not earlier as in the other three epics.

9. *Hanuman Returns to Rama:*

Kambar: Hanuman gets upon the peak of a mountain and flies back quickly. He goes to Mainaka as promised and then to Mahendra mountain. Angada, Jambavan and other companions who were anxiously waiting for him express their pleasure by dancing, jumping, weeping and embracing, lifting, feeding and carrying him on

232. Adhyatma Ramayana (5-4-44)

233. *Ibid.*, (5-5-6)

their shoulders. They are sorry for his scars. He describes Sita's holy and austere life and shows the Choodamani:

"But the story of his fights
With Rakshasas, or of his setting fire
To Lanka town, he passed in silence o'er
For he was loth his own exploits to tell."[234]

But the monkeys infer Hanuman's acts from his scars and injuries and say:

"The wounds announce thy struggles with the foes,
While thy return proclaims thy victory.
The columns dark of smoke, that younder rise
Into the sky betray the ruin thou
Hast brought upon thy enemies! What need,
Alas, of words about the strength of foes
When brought is not the queen with thee?"[235]

Without wasting time, all start back to Kishkindha with pleasure at having found out Sita's whereabouts and brought an insignia. On the way they have a cambat with Dadhimukha and his two crores of monkey warriors for destroying their Madhuvan garden. In the meantime, Rama is consoled by Sugriva, whenever he falls unconscious thinking of Sita. Rama is kept alive by the thought of Hanuman getting good news.[236] Suddenly one day Dadhimukha drenched in blood, comes before Sugriva, complains about Angada and his forces. Sugriva infers the result of Hanuman's expedition and informs Rama. Sugriva consoles Dadhimukha who befriends Angada. All see Rama with Hanuman in front.[237] Rama sees Hanuman prostrating towards Sita's direction indicating her penance which Rama feels happy to understand. The poet says:

"Came Han'man: and coming, worshipped not
His Majesty's twin feet but turned to her

234. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (5-15-9)
235. *Ibid.*, (5-5-10)
236. *Ibid.*, (5-15-30)
237. *Ibid.*, (5-15-51)

Devoid of bloom: with hands o'er his head
In reverence, he fell down flat on earth,
And long intoned her name!"[238]

Now Hanuman says to Rama that he saw 'the jem of chastity' with his own eyes in the island of Lanka. He praises her:

"To gold, gold is the match; to her, she 'lone;
She matches you to you alone; and me,
She grants as well, there's none but me to match!"[239]

He continues:

"O bowman brave with mighty shoulders broad!
In roaring sea-laved Lanka on the hill
Not maiden rare of virtues great I saw,
But Noble birth and Patience Boundless self
And her called chastity, I saw all three
Step a dance in ecstasy!"[240]

"In her eyes you dwell, and in her thoughts as well;
On her lips you play and in the very depths
Of her heart besides; and in unhealing wound
Then how could it be said that she has e'er
Parted from you?"[241]

He says that he saw her in Lanka in the same hut, built by Lakshmana at Panchavati :

"In Lanka midst the ocean deep,
Beneath sky-reaching forest dark
Unknown to either morn or noon
In a bower under lofty trees,
In the grassy hut your brother built,
Dwells she—the stern austerity
Of Austerity herself."[242]

238. *Ibid.*, (5-15-55)
239. *Ibid.*, (5-15-60)
240. *Ibid.*, (5-15-62)
241. *Ibid.*, (5-15-63)
242. *Ibid.*, (5-15-64)

Hanuman refers to the curse of Brahma that, should Ravana touch any woman without her consent, his head will break into hundred pieces and adds that that was why Ravana carried Sita with the hut itself[243] and why he dared not touch her at any time. He mentions with tears the manner in which Sita was guarded by demonesses. He says how Ravana was about to kill her but did not and asked the demonesses to tease her in all possible ways, and how Sita wanted to commit suicide when he uttered Rama's name[244] and delivered the message and the ring. He tells Rama of her message and the time-limit. Then he shows the Choodamani and Rama takes it with joy and thrill at heart. He feels a change in his person and so greatly pleased—

> "Even as on the day when first before
> The holy fire he clasped her hand."[245]

> " His hair stood on end, tears flowed freely from his eyes; there was a tremor in his arms and chest; sweat drops suffused his whole body; he breathed heavily; his body swelled with joy. Oh, who can tell all that passed in his heart?"[246]

Angada and others come. Rama wants to expedite action, and on the orders of Sugriva, the army gets ready and all of them start immediately with Neela in front. Hanuman requests Rama to ride on his shoulders and so he does.[247] Angada requests Lakshmana to get over his shoulders and he also accepts the suggestion.[248] All go ahead. On the way Hanuman relates a little of what he saw in Lanka. In twelve days, all reach the sea shore.[249]

This brings us to the end of Sundara Kanda.

243. *Ibid.*, (5-15-65)
244. *Ibid.*, (5-15-74)
245. *Ibid.*, (5-15-82)
246. *Ibid.*, (5-15-83)
247. *Ibid.*, (5-15-88)
248. *Ibid.*, (5-15-89)
249. *Ibid.*, (5-15-93)

Tulasi: Hanuman starts with such a tremendous roar that pregnant demonesses deliver before their time. In a single jump Hanuman comes to the other side of the sea. The monkeys cry with immense of joy. From his cheerful face, they infer the success. With great pleasure, all go to Rama, hear from Hanuman of the happenings in Lanka. On the way they enter Madhuvan with Angada, eat the intoxicating fruits and fist away the watchmen.[250] The watch men run to Sugriva and from their report Sugriva guesses the result of Hanuman's success. By this time Angada with Hanuman and other monkeys reach the place and announce their success by the grace of Rama,[251] adding that it is Hanuman that saved their lives. Rama meets them all. Jambavan says that, on whom-so-ever Rama showers his grace, he is sure to be happy for ever, and that all has been triumphantly achieved by Hanuman with the Grace of the Lord. Rama embraces Hanuman and asks him about Sita. Hanuman says:

> "Your name stands sentinel by day and night; her contemplation of your person is the gate; her feet are fettered by her eyes; by what road, then, can her life escape?'[252]

Then he gives the Choodamani. Rama receives and presses it to his heart. Delivering Sita's message, Hanuman says that she with eyes full of tears wanted him to clasp the feet of her lord and his brother and asks for what sin the lord has forsaken her[253] when she is constantly thinking of him. He says:

> "True, there is one offence in me which I acknowledge now that I am separated from you and still my life has not taken flight; but Lord, this is the fault of my eyes which have forcibly prevented my life from passing forth. Bereavement is fire, my body cotton and my sighs the wind; so would my body be consumed in a moment, but for their own sake my eyes shed such a flood of tears that it cannot be burnt away even by the fire of bereavement."[254]

250. Ram Charit Manas (5-28-4)
251. *Ibid.*, (5-29-2)
252. *Ibid.*, (5-30)
253. *Ibid.*, (5-31-2)
254. *Ibid.*, (5-31-4)

Hanuman's heart is now full and he is silent for a while. He requests Rama:

> "O merciful Lord! her every moment passes like an aeon. Haste, Lord, to set out conquer the villainous host by the might of your arm and bring her back.'"[255]

Rama gets a mixed feeling of pain and pleasure and his lotus-eyes get wet and he says:

> "Should he who comes to me for refuge in thought and word and deed know aught at all of misery?"[256]

Rama expresses his gratitude to Hanuman:

> "Hearken monkey, no god or man or sage or any mortal creature has done me such a service as yourself. What service can I do you in return? There is none that I can think of to equal yours. Believe me, my son, think as I may, I realize I cannot pay my debt."[257]

Rama looks at Hanuman again and again with tearful eyes. Hanuman feels immensely happy and falls at his feet. Rama takes him up, but he would not. Rama blesses him with his hand on his head. Then Rama takes Hanuman and embraces him, and seats him nearby asking him how he burnt the forts of Lanka. Finding Rama happy, Hanuman says, that he as a monkey jumped and burnt the golden city of Lanka, destroyed the demons and gardens, and all by his grace and nothing by his own might.[258] He only prays for eternal devotion and the same is granted by Rama.

Rama asks Sugriva to arrange for the march without delay. Sugriva calls for all his forces of monkeys and bears, extremely strong, all of whom get double their strength by the grace of Rama, and become winger mountains as it were. Rama commences the march,

255. *Ibid.*, (5-31)
256. *Ibid.*, (5-32-1)
257. *Ibid.*, (5-32-3, 4)
258. *Ibid.*, (5-33-4, 5)

when many good omens occur. At this moment, Sita's left arm vibrates with certain other good omens as against bad omens to Ravana.[259] All monkeys and bears start roaring like lions with mountains and trees in their hands and fly through the air. When they march, the elephants of the eight direction shiver, the earth shakes, mountains get unsteady and seas turmoil. Gods, Gandharvas etc., feel happy. The serpent king finds it difficult to support the earth and clutches the hard back of the tortoise often, recognising the glory of Rama and the forces marching towards Lanka.[260] Thus Rama reaches the sea-shore, and the bears and monkeys go to eat fruits.

This scene does not conclude Sundara Kanda in Tulasi Ramayan which extends upto the dialogue between Rama and Samudra, and Vibhishana's surrender.

In this scene, all the four works have adopted more or less the same story except for certain minor deviations. In Valmiki, Angada after hearing Hanuman suggests that Hanuman should go to Lanka again and return with Sita, but Jambavan disapproves, for it was not the order, and further Rama had vowed to kill Ravana himself and release Sita by his own prowess.[261] It is Lakshmana that asks Sugriva about the cause of the arrival of Dadhimukha and about his grievances. The Sundara Kanda in Valmiki ends with the report of Hanuman to Rama, and Lanka Kanda begins with Rama's appreciation of Hanuman. Then Rama feels extremely sorrowful at the difficulty to cross the sea, and Sugriva consoles him not to feel sorry like human beings. All the forces reach the sea-shore in the fourth chapter of Lanka Kanda. On the suggestion of Rama himself, Hanuman carries Rama and Angada carries Lakshmana on their shoulders.[262]

In Adhyatma Ramayana, when Hanuman crosses the ocean with a loud roaring, the monkeys on the opposite shore hear it and take it to indicate Hanuman's triumphant return and feel happy.[263] Here

259. *Ibid.*, (5-35-4)
260. *Ibid.*, (5-35-2 Chands)
261. Valmiki Ramayana (5-60)
262 *Ibid.*, (6-4)
263 Adhyatma Ramayana (5-5-12)

it is Rama that asks Sugriva about his conversation with Dadhimukha wherein he hears mention of Sita.[264] Sundara Kanda ends with Rama's appreciation of Hanuman and his blessing and embrace which are so very difficult to get.[265] Rama announces that he is his great devotee and is liked very much by him. The Yuddha Kanda (Lanka Kanda) begins with Rama's praises of Hanuman's achievement and the fear expressed by Rama about the crossing of the sea.[266] Sugriva consoles and assures him of success. All arrive at the seashore, Rama riding on the shoulders of Hanuman.

On a comparative study we find the following noteworthy features :

(a) In Kambar following Valmiki, after jumping back from Lanka Hanuman meets Mainaka on the way and takes leave and reaches his companions, but according to Tulasi and Adhyatma Ramayanas, Hanuman crosses straight to the other shore in one jump and does not see Mainaka.

(b) In Kambar, Hanuman does not relate his fights with the demons or his setting fire to Lanka. The monkeys guess these from the scars and wounds and by the smoke yonder. In the other three works Hanuman does relate all his exploits.

(c) Kambar makes Hanuman go at the head of the monkeys and fall at Rama's feet, who understands his success from his gait. Hanuman narrates the message and gives the Choodamani whereas in Tulasi as in the Valmiki Ramayana, Angada heads the monkeys and Jambavan and the monkeys relate the bravery of Hanuman. Then Hanuman hands over the Choodamani first. In Adhyatma Ramayana, the time of the offering of the Choodamani is not specially mentioned and Hanuman himself relates to Rama all about his trip etc.

(d) In Kambar alone Hanuman says that Sita is residing in Lanka in the same hut built by Lakshmana at Panchavati.

264. *Ibid.*, (5-5-28)

265. *Ibid.*, (5-5-63)

266. *Ibid*, (6-1-6, 7)

(e) Kambar and Tulasidas have avoided the repetition of the details of the incidents that occured to Hanuman on the sea on his way to Lanka. Valmiki has offered them in detail when Hanuman relates his adventures to Angada, Jambavan and other monkeys immediately after his return. In Adhyatma Ramayana it is short.

(f) In Kambar alone, Hanuman relates the exact time of his meeting Sita when she was attempting to commit suicide, whereas in Tulasi, Hanuman does not refer to Sita's attempt to commit suicide at that time. Valmiki and Adhyatma Ramayanas also have not mentioned this.

(g) In Kambar, Hanuman requests Rama to ride on his shoulders and Angada similarly requests Lakshmana. Both accede. Tulasidas has omitted this altogether and has only said that Rama started quite happily.[267] But in Valmiki and Adhyatma Ramayanas[268] Rama says that Hanuman shall carry him and Angada shall carry Lakshmana.

(h) In Kambar, as in Valmiki and Adhyatma Ramayanas, Dadhimukha returns to Madhuvan and meets Angada after which he with Hanuman and all others goes to Rama. But in Tulasi, Angada reaches Rama when Dadhimukha is making his representations.

(i) In Valmiki, Angada after hearing Hanuman suggests that they again go to Lanka and bring Sita, and this suggestion is disapproved by Jambavan.

(j) Rama feeling greatly diffident to cross the sea and Sugriva consoling Rama are found only in Valmiki[269] and Adhyatma Ramayanas.[270] Kambar and Tulasidas omit this.

267. Ram Charit Manas (5-35-2)

268. Valmiki Ramayana (6-4); Adhyatma Ramyana (6-1-31)

269. Valmiki Ramayana (6-1-2)

270. Adhyatma Ramayana (6-1-6 to 9)

(k) In Kambar, Sundara Kanda ends here. In Tulasi Ramayana it continues up to the conversation between Rama and Samudra after the surrender of Vibhishana. In Valmiki the Kanda ends with the first report of Hanuman to Rama after giving the Choodamani whereas in Adhyatma Ramayana, it ends with Rama embracing Hanuman on his success.

VI. YUDDHA KANDA

(Lanka Kanda)

1. *Vibhishana's Surrender:*

Kambar: Rama, who is himself like a deep sea, sees the sea and finds therein a pearl which reminds him of Sita and her smile. Rama asks the pearl as to why it is having any connection with the heartless demons.[1] His army of monkeys now is so big that by its weight the earth here goes down and the Himalayas rise up.

The celestial smith Mayan sets right the whole of Lanka in no time to Ravana's satisfaction. The court is called and Ravana expresses his sorrow at the disgrace suffered—

"The world resounds with bruit of our disgrace,
And yet I am not dead, but sit with pride
Upon this throne * * * *
* * * *
If the Vanara at least had fallen killed
By Rakshas' swords, our honour might have been
Redeemed: but now we're drowned in ignominy."[2]

1. Kamba Ramayanam (6-1-7)
2. *Ibid.*, (6-2-12, 14)

The ministers console him. Kumbhakarna tells Ravana that the destiny is working upon him for abducting Sita,[3] inspite of the love and advice of his wife and other damsels. He strikes a stern note and says that on the day he imprisoned the wife of another person against righteousness, destruction had set in the Rakshasa race. He, however, tells him that setting Sita free at that juncture may be shameful and that it is better to die in war with Rama.[4] Single-handed, he had already killed Khara and all his forces, and perhaps gods may join him. He suggests that Ravana should cross the sea at once and attack the enemy before he strengthens his army. Ravana agrees[5] but Indrajit disapproves. He offers to go and bring the heads of Rama and Lakshmana and 'torture Sita with the blood-curdling sight.'[6] Vibhishana calls Indrajit inexperienced due to young age.[7] Addressing Ravana, he says:

> "* * * * If thou wilt not my words
> Despise my liege, I'll tell thee what I judge
> Will save our state from overwhelming ruin.
> Thou'rt my father, mother, brother to me, and Lord,
> To whom I worship owe."[8]

With humility and fear, he opposes war lest Ravana should lose the kingdom of Lanka, more glorious than heaven. He says:

> "* * * Our Lanka fair and all they wealth
> Therein is burned: but are they wise who say
> It is a monkey caused this ruin dire?
> No, 'tis the fire of Sita's chastity
> That has, believe, our glorious town consumed."[9]

3. *Ibid.*, (6-2-49)
4. *Ibid.*, (6-2-53)
5. *Ibid.*, (6-2-57)
6. *Ibid.*, (6-2-61)
7. *Ibid.*, (6-2-71)
8. *Ibid.*, (6-2-72, 73)
9. *Ibid.*, (6-2-75)

Then Vibhishana says that ordinarily desire for woman and land bring destruction, and reminds him:

> "That may'st recall to mind the oracle old
> That said that through a damsel fair
> Will wane the mighty Rakshas power. His it
> My brother, now lost its force? "[10]

He points out at the lacuna in the boon he got i.e., neglect of men,[11] and monkeys, and cites his defeats at the hands of Kartaveeryarjuna and Vali. He assures him that Sita is none else but the re-incarnation of the same woman who burnt herself cursing that she would destroy him in her subsequent birth and that Rama and Lakshmana are the very incarnations of the All Powerful God for restoring peace on earth. They are the disciples of Vishwamitra and Rama had received the bow of Vishnu from Saint Agastya. The great Vali had already been killed by Rama after shooting the seven sala trees with a single shaft. He recalls the other achievements of Rama and the words of the saints and sages. Rama will end their race and relieve the gods from his oppression. He asks him to note the recent bad omens, and warns that gods, their enemies, have already joined Rama.

He begs:

> "So let us not the glory of our race
> Disdain with shame, but send away the fair
> Sita, e'er fixed in her chastity.
> No higher victory can bless our arms,
> Than this surrender willing!"[12]

These sane words have absolutely no effect on Ravana who only laughs at them. He speaks contemptuously of the human race:

> " * * * * Thy puny race
> Of men, thou say'st will conquer Rakshas might:
> 'Sit fear or love of them, I crave to know.

10. *Ibid.*, (6-2-77)
11. *Ibid.*, (6-2-78)
12. *Ibid.*, (6-2-99)

This does possess thy mind? I am not armed
With the blessing of the gods forsooth, to fight
With men. But did the god's give me the power
Express to break the might of the Monmoths huge
That bear the earth aloft of lift the mount,
The throne of Shiv?"[13]

He does not mind the curses, as, in spite of their number, he is ruling the heaven and earth. He finds fault in the action of Rama:

"* * * * I know
Thy Ram killed Vali great who conquered me,
But who could face the mighty ape and win?
And Rama ambushed him and aimed his dart!"[14]

He scorns Rama:

"Now who but thee can sing the power of him
Who broke the crumbled Bow of Shiv, and lost
His throne by woman's guile and lost his home
By Ravan's sport?"[15]

Ravana despises Vibhishana as lacking in wisdom. He orders preparation for war. But Vibhishana again stresses his point of view and begs Ravana to return Sita to Rama and make peace with him. Ravana recalls his own acts of bravado over the gods and tells Vibhishana:

"* * * * Fear not I'll call
Thee to the field: rest thou at home secure!"[16]

Vibhishana persists that Ravana should desist from his unrighteous action. In illustration he recalls in detail and in a very touching manner, the story of Hiranyakashipu, the father of Prahlada, who

13. *Ibid.*, (6-2-101, 102)
14. *Ibid.*, (6-2-108)
15. *Ibid.*, (6-2-109)
16. *Ibid.*, (6-2-117)

was much stronger than Ravana and yet was killed by the Man-Lion (Narasihma).[17] This touches not Ravana's heart and he mocks at Vibhishana:

"Thou praisedst him who has rejoiced to see
His father clawed to death. And where shall we
In all the world his like behold, except
In thee who tak'st the side of thy brother's foes?
And like him dost thou thirst to rule this land
When I have fallen upon the field? Think'st thou
That Fate shall grant thy wish? . . . ."[18]

He accuses him of having decided to join Rama:

"* * * * The day when I
Commanded that the Vanar should be killed
Thou saved st from my wrath. I knew not then,
But now I see, the reason why. Thine eyes
Saw far, and even then thou, did'st decide
To join him."[19]

Now Ravana turns bitter against him, and rebukes:

"* * * * A coward thou unfit
For martial deeds! Thy heart is full of dark
Designs, and thou dost love my hated foes
Belying thy race: me thinks the cobra is
Less Deadly than thee. Yet I kill thee not
Fearing reproach. But open not thy lips
Again, and leave me straight! If thou does show
Thy face in these my realms, thou die'st at once!"[20]

17. *Ibid.*, (6-3). The whole story of Hiranyakashipu is related in this Chapter in 175 stanzas.

18. *Ibid*, (6-4-4, 6)

19. *Ibid.*, (6-4-7)

20. *Ibid.*, (6-4-8, 9)

Vibhishana decides to quit Lanka and join Rama. He rises up into the sky at once,[21] with Analan and three faithful and good counsellors. He goes straight to the other shore hearing about Rama's arrival with huge monkey-forces. They decide to 'take refuge under Rama's feet and then to be freed from the cycle of birth and death.[22] By the side of the forces, they pass and standing before Rama's camp, they pray aloud:

"O Rama, thy protection sought."

The monkeys, misunderstand them as enemies and get ready to fight. Some mistake Vibhishana to be Ravana himself.[23] But Rama hears the sound of the prayer and initiates inquiry. Maindan goes and is told by Analan that the righteous and faithful Vibhishana seeks asylum under Rama[24] after a severe quarrel with Ravana against the imprisonment of Sita. Rama consults Sugriva and senior members of the army. Sugriva forgetting his own past, stands against admitting Vibhishana in their camp, for he has come there after quarrelling with his own brother who is their enemy,[25] and might be equally dangerous to them also. Jambavan suspects that he may be a spy come to deceive them. Neela and others support Jambavan. Rama asks for Hanuman's view. Hanuman says that as Vibhishana has himself come seeking refuge knowing Rama's might, sacrifice and righteousness, he may be taken in the camp. He adds that it was he who stood against his assassination ordered by Ravana,[26] that he found his house to be pure and religious with no liquor or non-vegetarian food,[27] that Trijata, Vibhishana's daughter, was the only woman consoling Sita in the Ashoka Garden[28] and that he was the one person

21. *Ibid.*, (6-4-10)
22. *Ibid.*, (6-4-20)
23. *Ibid.*, (6-4-38)
24. *Ibid.*, (6-4-45)
25. *Ibid.*, (6-4-62, 66)
26. *Ibid.*, (6-4-97)
27. *Ibid.*, (6-4-100)
28. *Ibid.*, (6-4-101)

with wisdom and righteousness among the demons. Hanuman adds that to admit Vibhishana would at once be diplomatic and generous. After approving of the view of Hanuman, Rama states :

> "Let there be victory, let be defeat,
> I cast not out the man that refuge takes
> In me. Why speak of this Vibhishana?
> Let come to me as suppliant the man
> Whose cruel hands my parents, brothers, friends,
> Had done to death. If leaving all other hope
> He comes to me, himself surrendering,
> Thence forth he is my brother, lover, friend
> Ev'n if he does prove false, my glory nev'r
> Would be eclipsed: 'twill only burn more bright."[29]

Rama illustrates his point with the sacrifices of Shibi Chakravarthi, Shiva the male pigeon and Vishnu[30] and the sacrifice of Jatayu. Sugriva and others concur and ask Vibhishana to be brought. Sugriva embraces Vibhishana[31] and tells him about Rama's consent. Vibhishana's joy knows no bounds:

> "Tears fell down Vibhishana's sable cheeks,
> Joy filled his anxious heart, and his hair stood
> On end."[82]

He feels greatly pleased and a little surprised too. He says:

> "Unworthy though I be, O Sir, I am
> By Rama's truth exalted high e'en as
> The poison was when it was drunk by Shiv.
> If this should he his mercy's way, and this
> The counsel of His noble heart, then doomed,
> Alas, is all our Rakshas race![33]

29. *Ibid.*, (6-4-108, 109)
30. *Ibid.*, (6-4-110 to 113)
31. *Ibid.*, (6-4-123)
32. *Ibid.*, (6-4-125)
33. *Ibid.*, (6-4-126, 127)

He feels like one who expects to go to hell but is taken to heaven. Sugriva and Vibhishana come to Rama at whose sight Vibhishana's hairs stand on end and tears of joy flow from his eyes. He takes him to be Vishnu himself. He feels happy that because of Ravana, he has such great fortune,[34] and blesses the demons for their expected destruction at Rama's hands. Vibhishana falls at Rama's feet. Rama takes him up with both hands, and then and there offers him the kingdom of Lanka.[35] On his direction, Lakshmana solemnly crowns Vibhishana who beseeches the grace of Rama's feet. Rama tells him with a wide open heart:

"When Guha joined us on Ganga's banks,
I counted myself blessed with brother's four:
Sugriva to me a fifth did add; and now
With thee we are become seven loving brothers.
Blest verily is father Dasharath:
One son he banished to the forests wild,
But sons on sons do grow on him, and bless
His royal name."[36]

On this Vibhishana accepts the crown to the great happiness of gods and all assembled there. Rama asks the crowned king Vibhishana to go with Sugriva round the army as a king should after coronation. Lakshmana and Sugriva take him round. Rama gives him a safe abode.

Tulasi: After Hanuman's departure the demons get anxious about their very existence. They wonder what might not happen on the arrival of the master, when a messenger can play so much havoc. Mandodari is greatly distressed and appeals to Ravana:

"Cease, husband, to strive against Hari; take my advice to heart, it is for your good. Lord, if you value your security, summon your minister and send back the wife of him whose envoy performed such feats of valour that the demons' wives give birth before their time when they recall them. Sita

34. *Ibid.*, (6-4-138)
35. *Ibid.*, (6-4-142)
36. *Ibid.*, (6-4-146)

has come like a cold winter night to shrivel up the lotus-bed of your race. Hearken, husband; unless you surrender Sita, there is no hope for you, though Shiva and Brahma should help you, Rama's arrows are like a host of serpents, and the demon throng as frogs; forgo your obstinate intent and take wise steps or ever they swallow us up."[37]

Ravana laughs arrogantly and says:

"Of a truth, women are timorous by nature, afraid when things go well, weakminded too! If the army of monkeys does come, our poor demons will eat them up and live! It is quite radiculous that my wife should be afraid when the very guardians of the spheres fear me and tremble."[38]

Ravana calls his council soon after he hears the arrival of the army on the opposite shore. His councillors laugh at the army of men and monkeys and beg of Ravana to remain care-free, praising his past brave deeds. Vibhishana says:

"Whoever desires his own welfare and to enjoy good repute, good understanding, a good manner of life or any other happiness, he, my lord, should shun to look on the face of another's wife."[39]

He appeals to him 'to give up lust, anger, pride and greed which lead to hell, and take to the worship of Rama whom the saints worship.'[40] Vibhishana clearly tells him that Rama is not a mere human being but the very 'Sovereign of the Universe'. He describes Rama as 'Death of Death himself, the Absolute, the perfect, the Unborn, the Blessed Lord, All pervading, Invincible, without origin or end.' He advises him to become a suppliant of Rama, for he relieves all fears of those who go to him. He requests him to give back Sita to the lord. Now, Malyavan, another wise councillor, feels happy at the advice tendered by Vibhishana, and begs of Ravana

37. Ram Charit Manas (5-36-3 to 5-36)

38. *Ibid.*, (5-37-2)

39. *Ibid.*, (5-38-3)

40. *Ibid.*, (5-38)

to follow the same.[41] Ravana gets wild on these two and asks his men to turn them out. Malyavan immediately leaves the place but Vibhishana persists:

"In your heart is lodged unwisdom to your undoing, so that you reckon your friends your enemies and your enemies your friends, and lavish your affection on that Sita who is the night of death for all the demon race."[42]

So saying he clasps Ravana's feet and requests him to return Sita to Rama lest ill befall him. All the persuasion only excites Ravana's anger and he cries:

"Villian, death is at your door! You only live, you wretch, because I continually support you, and yet, you idiot, you prefer to take my enemy's part! Tell me, you scoundrel, who is there in the whole world whom I have not vanquished by the might of my arm? You live in my city, but your heart is with the ascetics. You had better go to them, you fool, and preach your moral sermons!"[43]

So saying, Ravana kicks Vibhishana with his feet,[44] but he clasps those feet and says:

"You have done well to strike me, for you are as my father, but still, O King it were well for you that you should worship Rama."[45]

Finding further stay in Lanka impossible, Vibhishana flies with the ministers through the air openly telling all:

"Rama is true to his purpose, the mighty Lord, and your court is doomed to death! Now I go to seek refuge with Raghubir; let no one blame me!"[46]

41. *Ibid.*, (5-41-1)
42. *Ibid.*, (5-41-4)
43. *Ibid.*, (5-42-1, 2, 3,)
44. *Ibid.*, (5-42-3)
45. *Ibid.*, (5-42-4)
46. *Ibid* (5-42)

He goes with a cheerful heart. The very thought of being able to see the lotus feet of Rama, which saved Ahalya,[47] and which are ever in the heart of Shiva, give him pleasure, and a feeling of him-self being blessed. At the other shore, the monkeys taking him to be a spy inform their king Sugriva who, in turn tells Rama that the brother of Ravana has come to meet him. Rama seeks his advice and Sugriva says:

> "Demon trickery is past all understanding. Why has he come here, this fellow who can change his shape at will? The fool has come to spy out the land; I propose he be bound and kept under guard."[48]

Rama appreciates his view, but differs from him and states:

> "I have vowed to reassure those who come to me for refuge."[48]

Hanuman feels overjoyed to hear of Rama's generosity and grace. Expressing his firm stand to rescue any one coming for protection, Rama categorically states:

> "I would not turn away from one who was guilty of the murder of ten million brahmins if he came to me for shelter. As soon as any creature enters my presence, the sins of ten million lives are blotted out."[50]

He says that one with an evil heart can never approach him, and as such he assures them that Vibhishana should necessarily be of a pure heart. He goes to the extent of saying:

> "Even if the ten-headed has sent him to spy out our secrets, we have no reason to fear, Monkey King, and nothing to lose?"[51]

47. *Ibid.*, (5-43-3)
48. *Ibid.*, (5-44-3, 4)
49. *Ibid.*, (5-44-4)
50. *Ibid.*, (5-45-1)
51. *Ibid.*, (5-45-3)

He finally says that if he has come for refuge frightened at the actions of Ravana, he would protect him as his own life. Rama smiling asks Vibhishana to be brought before him. Vibhishana at the very sight of Rama, gets his eyes full with tears of joy. His body begins trembling with feeling and he speaks out mildly:

"Lord, I am Ravan's brother, a demon by birth, O! saviour of the gods, by nature addicted to sin, with a body of darkness and loving the dark like an owl. * * * * Save me, save me, O! Raghubir, dispeller of woe and consoler of the suppliant!"[52]

So saying he prostrates and Rama with great delight takes him up and embraces him, and seating him nearby says:

"I know all about your way of life, your excellence in virtue and your abhorrence of vice."[53]

Vibhishana responds:

"Now that I have seen your feet, Raghuraya, all is well with me, for you have had mercy on me as your true servant. No creature can be happy or dream of inward peace till he abandons lust that brings naught but woe and worship Rama."[54] * * * * Now, Rama, all is well with me. The fears that burdened me are at an end, for I have seen your lotus feet that are adored by Brahma and Shiva."[55]

Rama says that, should Ravana approach him in awe and look to him for refuge, abandoning all vices, he would gladly receive him and make him a saint in no time, and that saints like Vibhishana are dear to him. He declares that it is for the sake of the saints and to stabilise righteousness on earth that he is constrained to take on the mortal form.[56] The monkeys feel immensely pleased and shout:

"Glory to him in whom all mercy dwells.'[57]

52. *Ibid.*, (5-46-4 and 5-46)
53. *Ibid.*, (5-47-3)
54. *Ibid.*, (5-47)
55. *Ibid.*, (5-48-3)
56. *Ibid.*, (5-49-4)
57. *Ibid.*. (5-50-1)

Vibhishana requests Rama:

> "Now gracious Lord, grant me that purifying faith in thine own person which ever delights the soul of Shiva."

Rama grants, "So be it",[58] and asks for sea water, saying:

> "Although, my friend, you do not desire reward, yet the vision of myself is effectual throughout the world",

and puts on his forehead the mark of royalty.[59]

In Valmiki, Rama is greatly distressed to think of Sita's unbearable lot in Lanka amidst the demons and his own inaction, and enquires Lakshmana when they both will unite.[60] Ravana discusses with his ministers about the destruction caused by one monkey and the future action. His ministers extol him and suggest that the affair be treated lightly, for they are mere men and monkeys. They propose that Indrajit may be sent to kill Rama with the army of monkeys.[61] Vibhishana offers sane advice as a brother, but in vain. Next day also Vibhishana tries to bring Ravana to follow the path of righteousness, but again in vain.[62] Ravana continues to be drunk with the passion for Sita. He calls for a special session and asks his selected warriors and ministers to offer their suggestions. Kumbhakarna openly speaks about the mistake of Ravana. He is, however, ready to kill the two men and asks Ravana to remain in peace and indulge in pleasures.[63] Mahaparshva also speaks accordingly to the satisfaction of Ravana, but Ravana recalls Brahma's curse on him. Now Vibhishana again firmly puts forward his plea to send back Sita before the army of monkeys marches on Lanka, for none of his warriors can stand against Rama. Indrajit accuses him of cowardliness, and boasts of his own prowess. Vibhishana treats him as an inexperienced child with a raw intellect, and asks Ravana again to send Sita with diamonds, dresses and other valuables so that Ravana and his people may live happily in Lanka. Ravana suspects his

58. *Ibid.*, (5-50-4)
59. *Ibid.*, (5.50-5)
60. Valmiki Ramayana (6-5)
61. *Ibid.*, (6-7)
62. *Ibid.*, (6-10)
63. *Ibid.*, (6-12)

integrity and states that, had any other person uttered the same words, he would have killed him instantaneously. On this Vibhishana leaves the place with four other demons through the air, saying that he cannot tolerate such words from him though he is like a father to him.[64] He reaches the place of Rama and says from the sky to the hearing of Sugriva, Hanuman and other monkeys:

> "I am Vibhishana the younger brother of Ravana. I could not tolerate his evil stand, and have come to take refuge under the feet of Rama leaving my sons and wife. Please inform Rama about my arrival!"[65]

Sugriva takes him to be a spy from Ravana and tells Rama that he should be adequately punished. Rama asks for the views of others. All but Hanuman speak against entertaining Vibhishana in their camp. Hanuman says that he has come with the hope of getting the kingship of Lanka and that he may be taken in their camp. Rama supporting Hanuman, tells Sugriva the sacrifice of a pigeon, and of the code of Kandu, the son of Rishi Kanva, that if one, whoever he may be, comes to seek refuge, he should perforce be welcomed and offered help. Rama sends for him through Sugriva whether he be Vibhishana or Ravana himself. Now Sugriva rejoices at Rama's sentiment. Vibhishana with the four demons bows before Rama and tells him about his position, and seeks refuge under Rama. Rama encourages him and asks him about the forces at Lanka. Vibhishana gives the details of the forces including that of Kumbhakarna, Prahastha, Indrajit, Mahodara, Mahaparshva, Akampana etc. Rama promises him to kill all these forces with Ravana, and crown him king of Lanka. He embraces Vibhishana and asks Lakshmana to bring sea-water for his coronation, and on his words Lakshmana performs the ceremony.

In Adhyatma Ramayana, the scene is in a summarised form except for Vibhishana's praises of Lord Rama. In Lanka, only Kumbhakarna and Indrajit give their views followed by Vibhishana. At the sea-shore, only Sugriva speaks against receiving Vibhishana.

64. *Ibid.*, (6-16)

65. *Ibid.*, (6-17)

The story of the scene is practically similar, but certain details and the treatment differ as follows:

(a) The Yuddha Kanda of Kambar commences with this scene, whereas it is in Sundara Kanda itself in Tulasi. In Valmiki and Adhyatma it comes a little after the beginning of Yuddha Kanda.

(b) Kambar states that the burnt Lanka was reconstructed by Mayan, the smith of heaven. Neither Tulasi nor the other epics mention this.

(c) Only in Tulasi. Mandodari advises Ravana to return Sita and purchase peace but he rejects. In Kambar, it is stated in Sundara Kanda that Mandodari is dreadfully afraid to advise Ravana against his passionate attitude and she murmurs with fear which is observed by Hanuman.

(d) In Kambar, Kumbhakarna accuses Ravana but says that the best action is to fight aginst Rama and Lakshmana and die in the battle field. Tulasidas does not touch upon any individual opinion. He contents with saying that the demons only laugh at the men and monkeys praising the prowess of Ravana. In Valmiki and Adhyatma, Kumbhakarna accuses Ravana but says that he alone will face the men and monkeys and kill them in no time.

(e) Kambar's Indrajit requests his father to send him to bring the heads of the two men for torturing Sita. Tulasi is silent. In Valmiki, the ministers suggest to Ravana to send Indrajit to destroy Rama and the army of monkeys. In Adyhatma, the version is same as in Kambar.

(f) The advice of Vibhishana is differently given in the four works, though the result is his quitting Lanka. In Tulasi, Ravana kicks him and asks him to get out of his sight. Only in Valmiki, Rama is not described by Vibhishana as god-incarnate.

(g) Only in Kambar, Ravana tells Vibhishana that he will not be called on to fight in the battle field and that he may rest at home

(h) Kambar's Vibhishana alone relates the story of Hiranyakashipu to make Ravana understand his real position, as Hiranyakashipu was much stronger than him.

(i) Only Kambar's Ravana chides Vibhishana for having saved Hanuman who destroyed Ashoka garden and killed Akshaya and other demons.

(j) In Kambar, when Vibhishana comes to Rama, it is Analan that speaks on his behalf. Rama takes the views of Jambavan and all other important chieftains. Hanuman also speaks and recalls Vibhishana's recommendation in Lanka when Ravana proposes to kill him and the religious appearance of Vibhishana's house and the part played by Trijata etc. In Tulasi only, Sugriva offers his view against Vibhishana and Hanuman does not speak. He later feels happy at Rama's generosity and grace. In Valmiki, all the chiefs of the monkey army offer their opinions. Hanuman also speaks but does not refer to Vibhishana's life in Lanka or about Trijata. He also states that Vibhishana has come only for getting the kingdom of Lanka. In Adhyatma Ramayana, only Sugriva offers his opinion. Hanuman does not speak at all.

(k) In Kambar as against the other epics, Rama only expresses his views for the consideration of the leaders, citing various examples from mythological stories. When Sugriva and others approve of the views, Rama sends for Vibhishana.

(l) Vibhishana takes Rama to be Vishnu himself in Kambar, Tulasi and Adhyatma, but not so in Valmiki.

(m) Only in Kambar, Vibhishana prays to Rama to grace him with the feet that blessed Bharata. Rama now takes him as the seventh brother.

(n) In Kambar alone, crowned king Vibhishana goes round with sugriva and Lakshmana for the military honour.

(o) In Tulasi, Malyavan is also turned out by Ravana for supporting Vibhishana, but Kambar and the two source epics do not make any mention of Malyavan in this scene.

(p) Only in Tulasi, Rama tells Vibhishana that 'it is only to save the saints and to establish righteousness on the earth he is constrained to take on mortal forms.'

(q) In Kambar, it is Lakshmana who performs Vibhishana's crowning ceremony. So also in Valmiki and Adhyatma. In Tulasi, it is Rama himself who puts on his forehead the mark of Royalty.

(r) Only in Valmiki, Hanuman states that Vibhishana has come with the hope of getting the throne of Lanka.

2. *Bridging the Ocean:*

Kambar: Sugriva and Vibhishana plan about the future action. Rama asks Vibhishana to tell him about the castles and fortifications of Lanka. Vibhishana tells all about his island and peoples including warriors, armies etc. and of Ravana in detail, adding that Ravana can die only at his hands.[66] He also explains to Rama the great prowess of Hanuman which made him quit Ravana's side as also Hanuman's earlier actions at Lanka.[67] Rama praises Hanuman and assigns him the place of Brahma in his next birth.[68] Then he asks Vibhishana to suggest how to cross the ocean. Vibhishana suggests that Rama may request Samudra (the God of ocean) to make way for their crossing. Rama prays to the god of the ocean for seven days, but Samudra does not appear.[69] Rama gets angry and takes the bow from Lakshmana for shooting Samudra,[70] strings and sounds it. With the unfailing shafts, he shoots at Samudra as

66. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (6-5-59)
67. *Ibid.*, (6-5-68)
68. *Ibid.*, (6-5-72)
69. *Ibid.*, (6-6-6)
70. *Ibid.*, (6-6-15)

if putting an end to the whole universe with the fire from his eyes and with the shafts. The ocean begins boiling and the living beings therein begin dying. Even the birds flying above die out due to excessive heat. Finally Rama aims the 'Brahmastra'. The whole universe gets frightened. Now comes out Samudra and aplogises and explains that he was at the other end of the ocean.[71] He begs of Rama to excuse him and prostrates before him. Rama excuses him but asks for an object for the shaft. Samudra requests Rama to shoot at the Avunars, more than a hundred crore at Maruhandaram island, who live upon other's lives.[72] Rama sends the shaft accordingly which kills all those Avunars and returns back to Rama. Rama cools down and asks the god of Ocean to make way for him and his army to reach Lanka.[73] Samudra suggests the construction of a bridge on the ocean and offers to bear the same, for it will take a long time for the ocean to dry so as to allow the army to cross.[74] Rama thereafter asks for the bridge to be erected, and goes to his camp, and so does Samudra. Now Sugriva and Vibhishana invite Neela to construct the bridge. Neela agrees and asks for mountains, hills and sand to be brought. Jambavan directs all the monkeys who bring the materials singing and dancing. Neela begins his work. Mountains containing elephants and smaller animals are brought by Hanuman, Neela, Angada etc. and bamboo forests and wild gardens with fragrant flowers with honey in plentiful measures. Neela sets all the materials in order, and the ocean is bridged in 'three days'. Sugriva, Vibhishana and others inform Rama. Rama feels pleased and embraces Sugriva and others.

Tulasi: Rama asks Vibhishana the way for crossing the deep ocean which is full of crocodiles, fishes, serpents and various other animals. Vibhishana answers:

> "Though your arrow can dry up a myriad seas, yet it were but courtesy to go and make a request of Ocean."[75]

71. *Ibid.*, (6-6-65)
72. *Ibid.*, (6-678)
73. *Ibid.*, (6-6-82)
74. *Ibid.*, (6-6-83)
75. Ram Charit Manas (5-52-4)

Rama agrees to the view of Vibhishana, but not of Lakshmana who requests Rama to dry up the ocean with his arrow. Rama does not accept this. He goes to the sea-shore and prays to the god of ocean. When Vibhishana leaves Lanka, Ravana asks his spies with Shuka to follow him. These spies see Rama and fall in his praise forgetting themselves. The monkeys take them to Sugriva who orders their limbs to be cut. A little later Lakshmana stops the monkeys from cutting the nose and ears of the spies finding them weeping in an apologetic way. Then Lakshmana gives a letter to the spies asking them to tell Ravana to return Sita, lest he should shortly find his end.[76] The spies go straight to Ravana and say that Hanuman is only a weak monkey before very many other in the army.[77] Shuka plainly tells Ravana that he can never stand before the enemy and that on the advice of Vibhishana, Rama is praying to the god of ocean for a path to cross the sea. Ravana laughs:

> "You fool, why give a false report of his greatness? I have plumbed the depths of my enemy's strength and understanding! Where in the world could one win victory or hold sway who has that coward Vibhishana for a counsellor?' [78]

Shuka produces a letter saying:

> " Rama's younger brother gave me this letter. Have it read and take comfort from it."[79]

The letter is read:

> "Either abandon your pride and like your brother seek as a bee the lotus feet of the Lord, or, villain, be consumed with all your house like a moth in the fire of Rama's shafts!"[80]

76. *Ibid.*, (5-54)
77. *Ibid.*, (5-56-4)
78. *Ibid.*, (5-58-3, 4)
79. *Ibid.*, (5-58-5)
80. *Ibid.*, (5-59)

Ravana inwardly gets frightened but smiles externally. Shuka also advises him to take the words of the latter to be true, and not to quarrel with Rama but surrender Sita to him. Ravana kicks him off. Shuka immediately leaves him and goes to Rama for refuge.[81] Shuka relates the whole story to Rama. He is released from a curse and returns to his own abode.[82] Rama continues with his prayers for three days, but the god of Ocean does not respond. Rama gets angry and says :

> "No love without fear."[83]

He asks Lakshmana to give him the bow and quiver. He strings the bow and aims an arrow at the ocean. Lakshmana feels pleased.[84] The heart of the ocean begins burning and the lives in it begin dying. Knowing this the God of ocean manifests himself in the form of a Brahmin.[85] He comes and clasps the feet of Rama with fear begging for excuse. He says:

> "The Lord has done well to teach me this lesson ; but still my bounds were set by you. A drum, a village boar, a shoodra, a beast and a woman, all these are fit for beating."[86]

He states that a single shaft of Rama can dry him up. Rama feels happy, and asks him to suggest a plan. The god of the ocean remembers about the blessing of a seer to Neela and Nala in their boyhood that huge mountains at their touch will float on water,[87] and suggests that with their help a bridge may be constructed offering his own support so that the glory of the Lord may be sung in all the three worlds. He also requests Rama to slay the iniquitous villains (abhiras) living in the northern shore with the shaft that he had already fixed in the bow.[88] Rama does the same. The god of the ocean leaves for his place. Sundara Kanda of Tulasi ends here.

81. *Ibid.*, (5-60-4, 5)
82. *Ibid.*, (5-60-6)
83. *Ibid.*, (5-60)
84. *Ibid.*, (5-61-3)
85. *Ibid.*, (5-61-4)
86. *Ibid.*, (5-62-3)
87. *Ibid.*, (5-63-1)
88. *Ibid.*, (5-63-3)

The Lanka Kanda begins in Tulasi with the words of Rama to his ministers to bridge the ocean and cross the same without any delay.[89] Now Jambavan says to Rama that his very name is the bridge for crossing the bigger ocean of life and death, and that the ocean in front of them is but trivial. Hanuman says that the ocean had at the beginning got dried up but again got filled up by the tears of the enemies' women.[90] Then on Jambavan's direction, the monkeys bring mountains and trees singing Rama's glory. Nala and Neela erect the beautiful bridge and Rama feels pleased.

In Valmiki, Sugriva and Hanuman ask Vibhishana how to cross the ocean. Vibhishana says that Rama should request Samudra to give way and adds that 'Ocean' is called 'Sagara;' for Sagar, an ancestor of Rama, got it dug and that Samudra will help Rama. Sugriva requests Rama to pray to Samudra. Rama agrees and Lakshmana also approves of the proposal.[91] A spy named Shardool comes from Ravana and gets frightened to see the big army. He goes back and informs Ravana who sends the demon Shuka to tell Sugriva that he is like a brother to Ravana, and to request him to return to Kishkindha, for Lanka cannot be won by any, even by the gods and gandharvas, let alone men and monkeys. Shuka comes to Sugriva disguised as a bird and gives the message but meanwhile the monkeys surround and beat Shuka. He manages to slip out into the sky and asks Sugriva for his reply to Ravana. Sugriva says that Ravana is by no means his friend or brother but an enemy and may await his end with all his forces in Lanka. Angada intervenes and asks him to be caught, as he is only a spy. The monkeys catch and tie him. Shuka now weeps crying to Rama. Rama advises that a messenger should not be beaten and says that it is better to set him free. Rama then lies down on the ground over Kusha grass resolved to cross the ocean or die, and observes silence for three days. There is no response from Samudra and consequently Rama gets furious. He takes his bow and sends shafts. Lakshmana assuages his anger Sages request Rama from the sky to desist,[92] but Rama is not moved. At last Samudra comes out from the middle of the ocean and prays to Rama to forgive him and

89. *Ibid.*, (6-2)
90. *Ibid.*, (6-4-2)
91. Valmiki Ramayana (6-19)
92. *Ibid.* (6-21)

send the shaft already aimed on abhiras etc., who are thieves of Drumakulya. Rama grants this and acts upon it. Rama later blesses Samudra. Samudra tells Rama that, as Nala is the son of Vishwakarma, he may construct a bridge and that he will support it from the bottom. Nala takes up the work and a bridge is erected in five days with mountains and trees brought by the monkeys.

Adhyatma Ramayana practically follows Valmiki but there is no mention of Sugriva and Hanuman at Shuka's first visit, nor does Rama send any shaft over Samudra who appears as soon as Rama gets angry with a shaft in hand. There is no mention of Lakshmana. The shaft is sent over Drumakulya as in Valmiki, and it returns back into the quiver.[93] On the suggestion of Samudra, the bridge is constructed by Nala.

The salient features in this scene are :

(a) The conversation between Rama and Vibhishana about Lanka is found only in Kambar. Vibhishana tells Rama about Ravana, Lanka and its inhabitants etc. together with the great prowess of Hanuman and his actions in Lanka. Rama blesses Hanuman with the place of Brahma in his next birth. This is not stated in Tulasi and the other two.

(b) In Kambar and Tulasi, Rama directly asks Vibhishana how to cross the ocean whereas in Valmiki, Sugriva and Hanuman ask him. In Adhyatma, Vibhishana is not asked at all. Rama gets angry at the attitude of Samudra and aims a shaft at him.

(c) Onlv in Tulasi, Lakshmana disapproves Vibhishana's suggestion that Rama should pray to Samudra and wants the ocean to be dried up by Rama's arrow.

(d) In Valmiki, there are two spies from Ravana. In Tulasi Shuka and a few others come as spies but return with a letter from Lakshmana and later Shuka comes back due to the unkind attitude of Ravana and gets salvation by Rama. In Kambar, no spy is mentioned at this stage but only in the next scene. In Valmiki, Shukta is caught and kept under custody. Adhyatma has followed Valmiki.

93. Adhyatma Ramayana (6-3-83)

(e) In Kambar, Rama actually shoots at Samudra and takes out the Brahmastra also but in Tulasi, Rama does not send any arrow but only aims at the ocean, when the ocean-god manifests himself. In Valmiki, Rama uses a few shafts but not so in Adhyatma as followed by Tulasidas.

(f) In Kambar, Samudra does not suggest to Nala for the construction of the bridge but Sugriva and Vibhishana invite him. In Tulasi alone, the god of ocean mentions the boon Neela and Nala had got in their boyhood from a seer that stones would float on water on their touch. In Valmiki, Samudra suggests that Nala may be asked to construct the bridge but does not mention the boon. In Adhyatma, Samudra says that by the power of a boon, Nala will be able to erect a bridge on the water.

(g) In Kambar, Rama prays to Samudra for seven days. In Tulasi it is only three days as in Valmiki. In Adhyatma, Samudra appears as soon as Rama gets angry and aims a shaft.

(h) The bridge is constructed in three days in Kambar but in five days in Valmiki and Adhyatma. Tulasidas does not mention the number of days.[94]

(i) Only in Tulasi the god of ocean appears before Rama as a brahmin.

(j) Only Tulasidas concludes Sundara Kanda with the departure of Samudra.

(k) In Tulasi, Shuka is rescued from the monkeys by Lakshmana ; in Valmiki by Rama as followed by Adhyatma. The arrival of Shuka is not stated in Kambar.

(l) Only in Valmiki, Lakshmana pacifies Rama when he is angry over Samudra.

4. *War Preparation :*

Kambar : Rama is glad to see the bridge and presents Neela with a garland and golden ornaments got from Samudra. The whole

94. Ram Charit Manas (6-4-7)

army and Rama march over the bridge and cross the ocean. In Lanka, Nala erects suitable huts of different types for all in the army. At night in the moon-light come Ravana's spies Shuka and Sharana, disguised as monkeys. Vibhishana restores them to their original form by uttering a 'mantra.'. Rama asks them to tell the object of their visit without fear and they do so. Yet Rama permits them to see his armies as they pleased and go back.[95] Meanwhile Ravana hears of the arrival of his enemies in Lanka and holds counsel about the action to be taken. His maternal grandfather, Malayavan, advises him to surrender Sita to Rama and fall at his feet.[96] Ravana becomes angry and asks him to get away and live with Vibhishana. The spies come and describe the greatness of Rama and his army in detail. Ravana consults his councillors. His army-commander asks for order to straightaway wage war against the men and their army of monkeys, as they have made their work easy by voluntarily coming into their clutches. Malyavan dissuades them as their defeat is sure, Rama and Lakshmana being incarnations as also Sugriva, Angada, Hanuman and others.[97] Ravana mocks at Malyavan and boasts of his own strength. Rama with some others climbs over Suvela mountain close to their camp. He views Lanka's pomp and grandeur with great wonder. By this time Ravana also gets over a tower with his relations and sees the army of monkeys and gets furious seeing Rama and his army.[98] He himself locates Rama and asks Sarana who shows the leaders of Rama's army. Ravana smiles to see all monkeys and thinks that they can do him no harm.[99] Vibhishana shows Rama the persons on the other side. Sugriva dars over to Ravana,[100] and kicks him on the chest. Ravana attacks him with his twenty hands, throws him down and tramples on him with his feet. Sugriva drags him and both fall into the ditch surrounding the fort. They wrestle for a time. Sugriva plucks out the diamonds on Ravana's crowns and with them jumps back to Rama safe. He lays the diamonds at Rama's feet. Rama embraces him. Sugriva only feels sorry for returning without the ten heads of Ravana and without

95. Kamba Ramayanam (6-8-39)
96. *Ibid.*, (6-8-48)
97. *Ibid.*, (6-9-7 to 10, 13)
98. *Ibid.*, (6-10-19)
99. *Ibid.* (6-10-35)
100. *Ibid.*, (6-11-3)

setting Sita free.[101] Vibhishana is pleasantly surprised. Then Rama and Ravana return to their respective places. Ravana feels greatly insulted. Now returns spy Shardoola and tells him of the vast army and its great strength. Ravana gets angry and vows that he will finish the enemies the very next day.[102] He then holds counsel with his ministers. Some say that monkeys will be no match for them. Mali says that Sita may be returned, and is consequently rebuked by Ravana into silence.[103] Ravana allots different places to different warriors. The army of monkeys is also distributed over the various places. Sugriva and Lakshmana lead, and Rama accompanies them.

Tulasi : Rama looks at the beautiful bridge and says :

> " Very charming and pleasant is this spot, immeasurably inexpressibly glorious ; here will I establish the worship of Shambhu; this is my fixed intent".[104]

Sugriva sends a number of messengers and summons 'all the great sages, who set up an emblem of Shiva and worship it with due ceremony.' Now Rama says :

> " None is so dear to me as Shiva ; the man who is opposed to Shiva and is called my worshipper can never dream of winning to me ; the enemy of Shankara who aims at faith in me is fit for hell, a fool of little understanding. Those who love Shankara and are my foes and Shvia's foes who would fain be my servants shall dwell for a full aeon in the fires of hell! "[105]

Rama continues :

> " Those who make pilgrimage to Rameswara shall enter my realm when they leave the body, and he who brings the water of the Ganges to offer in this place shall win that liberation which is union with myself. To him who with guileless heart and no desire reverences this spot

101. *Ibid.*, (6-11-40)
102. *Ibid.*, (6-12-8)
103. *Ibid.*, (6-12-17)
104. Ram Charit Manas (6-5-2)
105. *Ibid.*, (6-5-3, 4 and 6-5)

> Shankara will give the gift of faith in me; and he who visits the bridge that I have built, shall without effort pass across the sea of birth and death."[106]

All feel happy and the sages leave to their places. The army crosses the ocean. The creatures in the ocean come out and gaze at Lord Rama. Rama and army cross the ocean and get into a camp pitched for them. The monkeys go out to feast upon delicious fruits. With their teeth, they cut off the noses and ears of demons they meet and do not leave them till they sing the praises of Rama.[107] The demons complain to Ravana. The Ten-headed is stunned to hear of the bridging and cries out with all the ten mouths :

> "Has he really bridged the sea — the home of springs — the resting place of streams — the Ocean — lord of waters — the floods — the waves — the mighty deep — the rolling billows — sovereign of river? "[108]

He however laughs and forgets the fears. When Mandodari hears of the arrival of Rama and of the bridge, she clasps her husband's hands and prays piteously :

> "Fight, Sire, with one whom you can vanquish in strength and understanding. The difference between yourself and Raghupati is of a truth the difference between a firefly and the sun. He who slew the stalwart Madhu and Kaitabha and overthrew the valient sons of Diti, he who bound Bali and killed Sahasrabahu, has come down to earth to relieve it of its burdens. Strive not, O king, with him in whose hand are fate and destiny and the souls of living creatures! Deliver up Janaki to Rama and bow your head before his lotus feet; entrust the kingdom to your son, go to the woods and worship Raghunath. Raghunath, sire, is merciful to the humble.[109] * * * * O king, worship Rama that I may ever be your happy wedded wife ".[110]

106. *Ibid.*, (6-6-1, 2)
107. *Ibid.*, (6-8-4)
108. *Ibid.*, (6-8)
109. *Ibid.*, (6-9-3 to 6-10-1)
110. *Ibid.*, (6-10)

Ravana is not at all moved. He boasts of his own prowess and assures her that her fears are baseless. Mandodari realises that his 'arrogance is due to the influence of fate'. Ravana consults his ministers who say that men, monkeys and bears are but their food. But Prahasta, a son of Ravana, contradicts them and asks why none of them felt hunger when Hanuman burnt Lanka.[111] He prays to Ravana:

> "Father, first send envoys; restore Sita and make your peace. If having recovered his bride, Rama returns home, do nothing more to anger him. If not, then, meet him on the battle field and fight with high resolve."[112]

Ravana gets wild at his son's words and calls him a fool and 'a prickly thorn bush sprung of a bomboo root'. Prahasta goes home hurt by the words. When the foe is at his door—Ravana goes to a high building, seats himself in a theatre and witnesses the dance of the angels and listens to the music of Kinnaras. Rama takes rest at the top of the mountain Suvela with Sugriva, Angada and Hanuman. He sees southwards and points to Vibhishana threatening clouds and lightning flashes signalling a heavy hailstorm. Vibhishana says that it is Ravana's umbrella while witnessing dancing etc., and shining ear rings of Mandodari.[113] Rama strings his bow and with a shaft strikes down the umbrella, crowns and ear rings to the ground but none there knows how.[114] The shaft returns to the quiver after the performance. Ravana's people are frightened but he asks:

> "When the loss of my heads has brought good luck, how can the falling of a crown be a bad omen?"[115]

Mandodari is greatly disturbed and prays to Ravana:

> "O lord of my life! Give up your opposition to Rama, my husband; be not so obstinate in regarding him as mortal man. Believe me when I tell you that the jewel of the house of Raghu is the All; for the Vedas declare that in

111. *Ibid.*, (6-12-2)
112. *Ibid.*, (6-12-5 and 6-12)
113. *Ibid.*, (6-18-3)
114. *Ibid.*, (6-18)
115. *Ibid.*, (6-20-2)

> his every limb is the fashioning of a sphere. His feet are the lower world, his head the home of Brahma, and in each one of his limbs there rest the other spheres.[116] * * * His breath is the wind and his voice the holy scriptures; his lips are greed and his fierce teeth the god of death; his smile is illusion and his arms the guardians of the quarters; his face is fire, his tongue, the lord of waters and his actions creation, preservation and dissolution[117] * * * He, even Rama the Blessed Lord, who is one with all created things, has come to dwell with us as man. * * * Devote yourself to the feet of Rama so that my wedded happiness may not be lost".[118]

Ravana laughs at her warning and cries:

> "Oh mighty indeed is the power of ignorance! Truly do all say of a woman's nature that there are eight defects ever present in her heart—fool hardiness, falsity, fickleness, timidity, folly, impurity and cruelty."[119]

He asserts that he is all powerful and pays no heed to her words. Mandodari blames his fate.

In Valmiki, Sugriva suggests to Rama to ride upon Hanuman and Lakshmana on Angada. All cross the ocean over the bridge. Certain omens foretell victory to Rama and defeat to Ravana. Rama directs the release of Shuka to go back to Ravana. Ravana again sends Shuka and Sarama to find out the strength of the enemy. They both come in the form of monkeys, but Vibhishana catches them. Rama asks them to see the army as they pleased and inform Ravana. The two spies return praising Rama. Ravana hears them and sends a few more spies with Shardool. Vibhishana catches them too but Rama sets them free. They inform Ravana of the disposition of the forces opposite suggesting that either Sita should be returned or war should be declared.[120] Ravana calls magician Vidyujjihva and asks him for a false head of Rama, his bow and arrow to dupe Sita. Ravana goes to Ashoka garden and tells Sita that her husband has been killed in war by Prahasta when Rama was sleeping and adds

116. *Ibid.*, (6-20-4 to 6-21-1)
117. *Ibid.*, (6-21-2, 3)
118. *Ibid.*, (6-21, 22)
119. *Ibid.*, (6-23-1, 2)
120. Valmiki Ramayana (6-30)

that Vibhishana, Lakshmana, Sugriva, Angada, Hanuman and Jambavan have also been killed. The false head is placed before Sita by Vidyujjihva with the bow, and Ravana asks her to forget Rama and accept his request.[121] Sita at the sight of the head and bow cries bitterly over her fate and asks Ravana to kill her also. Meanwhile Prahasta calls for all ministers and sends word to Ravana for immediate consultation. Ravana leaves and at once the false head and bow disappear. Ravana assembles the army.[122] Sita is consoled by Sarama, wife of Vibhishana, who tells her that Rama's forces had already crossed the ocean and were ready for a war with Ravana and that she will be shortly meeting Rama.[123] Sarama continues to keep Sita informed of the developments. Ravana is given sane advice by Malyavan[124] but in vain. Ravana allots warriors to different places. Rama also orders the disposition of his army and gets over the Suvela Mountain with Sugriva, Vibhishana and others to see Lanka. Ravana is seen seated in all his majesty on a high tower over the city gate. Sugriva, unable to suppress his anger, springs over to Ravana immediately and throws down his crown. Both have a severe wrestling. They fall into the fort ditch. Sugriva flies back to Rama without even Ravana knowing about it.[125] Rama embraces him but finds fault for his abrupt and thoughtless action and asks him not to repeat it. Then Rama inspects the army and gives orders for war, himself leading them. They reach the northern gate. Ravana also is ready there for war. Rama allots different positions to different warriors.

In Adhyatma Ramayana, the development is slightly different. Rama establishes an idol of Mahadeva (Shiva) at Rameswaram after the bridging, and expatiates on its glory. Then they cross the ocean, and camp around the Suvela mount. Rama and Lakshmana climb the top of the mount on the shoulders of Hanuman and Angada respectively and see Lanka's grandeur and also Ravana seated with his councillors. Shuka advises Ravana to deliver Sita to Rama, for they are incarnations of the very Adinarayana God, the Supreme Being and Goddess of the Universe, the very source

121. *Ibid.*, (6-31).
122. *Ibid.*, (6-32).
123. *Ibid.*, (6-33)
124. *Ibid.*, (6-35)
125. *Ibid.*, (6-40)

of creation. He also shows Ravana the big army narrating the types of the forces and their numerical strength. He finally wants him to set himself free and take to the worship of Rama and Sita.[126] Ravana feels insulted and orders him to get out. Shuka as per the curse of Agastya, sheds the Rakshasa body and returns as a brahmin to his original abode. Malyavan also advises Ravana stating that Rama is Narayana, the God himself incarnated, but Ravana asks him to keep quite. Ravana then calls the ministers and appoints posts for war. Rama at this moment takes up his bow and sends a shaft which breaks thousands of white umbrellas and his ten crowns creating surprise[127] and a sense of insult. Ravana calls his commanders and declares war. Rama has already set up his army in position.

On a comparative study the following features deserve attention :

(a) In Kambar, Tulasi and Adhyatma, Malyavan tells Ravana that Rama, Lakshmana and others are incarnations, but in Valmiki he only advises not to fight with Rama without any reference to incarnations.

(b) In Kambar, Shuka and Sarana go as spies, in Valmiki Shardool and others whereas in Adhyatma Shardool and then Shuka. No spy is mentioned in Tulasi Ramayan.

(c) In Kambar, Shuka and Sarana are mere spies. In Valmiki and Adhyatma, they ask Sugriva to go and join Ravana. Tulasi omits Shuka-Sarana.

(d) In Kambar, following Valmiki, Sugriva springs upon Ravana from the mountain top and returns after a stiff fight with him. This is not mentioned in Adhyatma and Tulasi Ramayanas. On the other hand Rama shoots an arrow on Ravana which strikes down his crowns and also Mandodari's ear rings.

126. Adhyatma Ramayana (6-4)
127. *Ibid.*, (6-5-43, 44)

In Kambar, Sugriva brings the diamonds of Ravana's crown whereas in Valmiki he returns empty handed and receives warning from Rama against repetition of his abrupt action.

(e) Kambar does not refer to any worship at Rameswaram but Tulasidas gives a long description of the beautiful place after the construction of the bridge and installation of Shiva. Kambar has apparently followed Valmiki who does not refer to any Linga worship by Rama here and Tulasidas follows Adhyatma Ramayana.

(f) Only in Tulasi, there is no mention of any spy or messenger from Ravana, but the monkeys catch hold of the demons they find in Lanka, cut off their noses and ears, and make them sing the glory of Rama. These demons inform Ravana about it.

(g) Only in Tulasi, Mandodari advises Ravana twice at great length to return Sita to Rama and worship him stating that he is God-incarnate.

(h) Only in Tulasi, Prashasta, Ravana's son, advises him to return Sita and fight only in case Rama does not go back.

(i) Only in Valmiki, Ravana takes a false head and bow of Rama to Sita to make her believe that Rama is killed. In Kambar, Tulasi and Adhyatma no such incident is mentioned.

(j) Only in Valmiki, Sarama, the wife of Vibhishana, consoles Sita.

5. *Angada, the Ambassador*:

Kambar: Rama after deep thinking suggests to Vibhishana that in accordance with the right procedure an ambassador may first be sent to Ravana asking him to free Sita and that if he does not do so, war may be declared.[128] Vibhishana and Sugriva concur but Lakshmana does not. Rama explains to him the rules of

128. Kamba Ramayanam (6-13-2)

righteous war and assures him that finally war will have to be declared. Rama now selects Angada and says:

> "If this time too we send our Hanuman,
> Our foes will think there's none besides him here
> In all our host, to dare the Rakshas power,
> And fearless enter Lanka town. I wish
> That Angada go today; for even if forced
> To fight, he has the valour, force to force
> To meet, and safely to our side return."[129]

All agree. Angada is asked by Rama to go to Ravana as his ambassador to personally deliver an ultimatum either to return Sita or get ready for war. Angada's joy knows no bounds. He springs up like a lion into the air and flies like Rama's shaft stating within himself:

> "Now who of all the vanaras are like
> To me, for with his holy lips my Ram
> Has said, "If Hanuman is not to go
> Whom can we send but Angada?"[130]

When Angada dashes through Lanka, the demons feel terror-stricken that Hanuman is come again. Angada goes straight to Ravana and is greatly surprised and a little frightened too. He thinks:

> "x x x x x Has e'en the God
> Of Death the force to vanquish him? Then who
> Can meet the rakshasa of the shining arms
> Upon the field on equal terms? I see
> A feeble ray of hope in Rama's bow."[131]

He continues:

> "Can I believe there lives a living man
> Or God who can defeat this mighty giant?[132]

129. *Ibid.*, (6-13-9)
130. *Ibid.*, (6-13-13)
131. *Ibid.*, (6-13-16)
132. *Ibid.*, (6-13-17)

Now he understands the great prowess of Sugriva in having brought the diamonds of Ravana's crowns. Angada stands before Ravana as a lion. Ravana enquires of him the purpose of his visit. Angada states that he is the ambassador sent by Rama. Ravana laughs at Rama for having come with an army of monkeys, and asks Angada to tell who he is, and gets the reply that he is the son of Vali who had kept Ravana bound in his tail and who churned the ocean of milk with Mount Mandarachal, and was the son of god Indra.[133] Ravana changes his attitude and tries to win Angada saying that Vali was his friend and as such his son should leave the side of Rama, his enemy. Ravana promises to crown him king of Kishkindha.[134] Angada laughs a boisterious laughter and tells Ravana that his very brother has surrendered to Rama foreseeing the end of all in Lanka. Angada states fearlessly that he will never accept kingship even if offered by him, for a lion never accepts anything from a dog.[135] Ravana angrily enquires the purpose of his visit. Angada explains the message sent by the 'ever gracious' Rama that he should either deliver Sita or else war will be declared for him to deliver his life.[136] Ravana gets furious and asks 'four of his demons to catch and thrash him on the floor but Angada holds the four demons when they catch him, flies into the air, kicks them down and breaks their heads. Then he gets upon the tower of a high building and asks them all to run away before Rama's fiery arrows kill them. He returns to Rama and says of Ravana :

" His passion will not bate till all his heads
Do roll upon the ground.[137]

Tulasi : Rama consults his councillors about the next action. Jambavan suggests that Angada may be sent at first as an ambassador. All agree. Rama sends him. Entering Lanka Angada accidentaly meets Ravana's son who tries to kick him. Angada holds him by the leg and throws him down.[138] The demons get bewildered and say that the same old monkey who burnt Lanka has come

133. *Ibid.*, (6-13-24)
134. *Ibid.*, (6-13-25)
135. *Ibid.*, (6-13-29)
136. *Ibid.*, (6-13-31)
137. *Ibid.*, (6-13-43)
138. Ram Charit Manas (6-27-3)

again,[139] and show him the way unasked. Angada sees Ravana in the council-hall as a mountain of soot. The courtiers stand up on seeing him. This infuriates Ravana.[140] Angada fearlessly sits in the court with due reverence. On being asked by Ravana, he states that he is the ambassador sent by Rama and adds that he has come for doing good to him, as there was friendship between his father (Vali) and himself.[141] He states that Sita is the Mother of the Universe, whom he has abducted and advises him to surrender her to Rama who will then excuse all his sins. Ravana takes the words of Angada as childish and asks his father's name, and feels a little shy at the sharp reply. Ravana now teases Angada by saying that it is beneath his dignity to be the ambassador of an ascetic,[142] and asks about Vali. Angada smilingly says that he may himself embrace Vali after ten days and enquire about his welfare and understand as to what happens to one who opposes Rama. Ravana says that he excuses him for all his tall-talks as he is an ambassador, and then indulges in self-glorification and speaks poorly about Rama's warriors with the exception of one who burnt Lanka earlier.[143] Angada laughs and asks mockingly whether a monkey could really burn his Lanka, and adds that he is very small before Sugriva and others, for he is only his messenger. He says that before Rama, Ravana is as a frog before a lion and that the match should be equal in love and war. Ravana feels insulted, bites his teeth and says that it is the nature of a monkey to serve one who feeds him. Angada reminds him of Hanuman's example and says:

"You have neither shame, nor anger nor irritability."[144] He finally advises him to worship Rama.[145] For, even Brahma and Shiva cannot save him and death will be his end. Ravana gets filled with fury and speaks of the great prowess of his brother Kumbhakarna and son Indrajit and others and poorly about the monkeys. Angada tells him that he is the greatest of the shameless persons on earth and hence the selfpraise and his abduction of Sita when she was alone. He continues that he is sparing him as per

139. *Ibid.*, (6-27-4)
140. *Ibid.*, (6-28-4)
141. *Ibid.*, (6-29-1)
142. *Ibid.*, (6-30-3)
143. *Ibid.*, (6-33-3)
144. *Ibid.*, (6-39-4)
145. *Ibid.*, (6-42-1)

Rama's words, or else he could have broken his jaws and taken Sita back to Rama[146] after destroying his army and the city. Ravana gets angry and begins to insult Rama on his exile. Angada feels it unbearable and strikes both his hands on the earth shaking the very ground by which the demons fall down and run away frightened.[147] Ravana is just saved from falling down, but the beautiful crowns do fall. Some are taken by Ravana and some by Angada who throws them so as to reach Rama. Seeing them the monkeys say:

> "O God, have stars begun to shoot in the day time?"[148]

Rama tells the monkeys that they are crowns of Ravana thrown by Angada. Hanuman catches them with his hands and puts them before Rama to the pleasure of the bears and monkeys. Ravana in fury asks the demons to kill Angada. Angada smiles. Ravana goes further and asks his demons to eat up all bears and monkeys on earth and to get hold of the two ascetic brothers alive.[149] Angada also gets angry and says that he is leaving him for Rama's arrows to quench their thirst with his blood though he is strong enough to break his teeth, and feels like breaking all the ten heads and sink the whole of Lanka under the ocean but finds himself in a desparate condition without orders from Rama. Ravana calls Angada a talkative liar. Now Angada, thinking on Rama, plants his foot on the ground and challenges:

> "If you can move my foot, you fool, Rama will turn back, and I will admit the loss of Sita."[150]

On the orders of Ravana, all others including Indrajit attempt, but are unable even to shake it, and fall to the ground head downwards. Shame overshadows the proud enemies. Then Ravana himself goes to try when Angada mockingly asks:

> "What for do you hold my leg: You may not get salvation by this!"[151]

146. *Ibid.*, (6-45-3)
147. *Ibid.*, (6-48-2)
148. *Ibid.*, (6-48-4)
149. *Ibid.*, (6-50-1)
150. *Ibid.*, (6-52-5)
151. *Ibid.*, (6-53-1)

and advises him to go and hold the feet of Rama. Ravana feels insulted and returns. Then Angada tells him what is the righteous path for him, but Ravana turns a deaf ear. Angada leaves the place warning that Ravana will be killed in the battle-field as if in sport. He returns to Rama triumphantly and with tears of joy holds his feet. Mandodari again tries her best to bring him round on to the right path by recalling to him all that has happened and also reminding him about the breaking of the Shiva's bow when he was also present, the death of two of his sons and the burning of Lanka. Ravana only gets more furious. He goes to the council-hall. Rama asks Angada how he got those four crowns thrown by him. Angada says that four are only 'conciliation, bribery, punishment and the causing of dissention' which have left Ravana, and that his end has come very near. Rama asks the ministers to arrange for the attack. The army is assembled, bugles are blown and they roar, 'Victory to Rama, Victory to Lakshmana, Victory to Sugriva' which is heard by the demons and Ravana. He asks his army of demons to go to the four sides and eat up the bears and monkeys.[152]

In Valmiki, Rama on the suggestion of Vibhishana asks Angada to go to Ravana as his ambassador. Angada, like fire personified, flies in a minute to Ravana in the council-hall. He introduces himself and delivers the message of Rama and warns him that, if he does not return Sita and surrender to Rama, Vibhishana will get his throne after Ravana's immediate death. Ravana orders his councillors to seize and kill him. Four demons rush at him and Angada lets them catch him but later flies into the sky throwing them down violently thereby causing their death, destroys the main tower of Ravana's palace and comes back to Rama. All feel happy at his adventurous return.

In Adhyatma, there is no mention at all of Angada going as an ambassador.

This is a very significant scene in Kambar and Tulasi. On a comparative study with the sources of the two, the following points are found to be noteworthy :

(a) In Kambar, Rama himself suggests that Angada may first be sent as ambassador but in Tulasi, Jambavan suggests. In Val-

152. *Ibid.*, (6-60-3)

miki, it is Vibhishana. Only in Kambar the reason for selecting Angada is given. Lakshmana at first disapproves of the suggestion to send an ambassador and agrees only after Rama's explanation.

(b) Only in Kambar the immense joy of Angada is portrayed on his selection and also his surprise and fear at the sight of Ravana.

(c) The conversation between Ravana and Angada is lengthy in Kambar and Tulasi, short in Valmiki and absent in Adhyatma.

(d) In Kambar and Tulasi alone, Ravana offers the bait that, if Angada comes over to him, the kingdom of Kishkindha will be his shortly.

(e) Only in Tulasi the quarrel between Angada and a son of Ravana on the way is mentioned.

(f) In Tulasi alone Angada advises Ravana to surrender to Rama. Ravana as a friend of his father enquires about Vali's welfare. Angada beats the ground with his hands, frightening all. and Ravana narrowly escaping but his crowns fall down and four are thrown by Angada to Rama. Angada says that he himself can break Ravana's jaws and heads too and sink the island in the ocean but refrains from doing so for want of orders from Rama.

(g) Only in Tulasi, Angada plants his foot on the ground with a challenge, defeats the demons and Ravana gets insulted.

(h) Only in Tulasi after Angada's departure, Mandodari advises Ravana.

6. *The War — The First Phase*:

Kambar: On Rama's orders, Angada directs the monkeys to fill up the ditch surrounding the port and get into the city. The monkeys climb the fort-wall which goes into the earth due to their heavy weight. The demons attack the monkeys with their chariots, elephants, horses and other weapons. Monkeys run away to Sugriva. He faces them[153] followed by monkeys. Several die on

153. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (6-14-44)

both sides, but more among the demons, blood flowing in floods. Vajramushthi is killed by Sugriva.[154] The demons retreat. A little later Idumba, the bear-chief, throws a big mountain at the demon leader Kumbha who instantaneously dies.[155] Then commences a severe fight between Neela and Prashastha resulting in the death of the latter.[156] At the southern gate Angada kills Suparisen. Hanuman kills Dunmukha in the western gate. Ravana feels infuriated and hearing the death of Prahastha, he himself comes to the battlefield. Rama meets him with Lakshmana. Many die on both sides. Sugriva throws violently a big mountain on Ravana, which is powdered bv an arrow of Ravana.[157] When Sugriva gets tired, Hanuman comes from the western gate and breaks an arm-ring of Ravana, kills his charioteer and many demons. Ravana shoots a hundred shafts at Hanuman who consequently sinks down. Ravana mocks:

"Think ye with stones and trees and hairy arms
And fists, and shining teeth and empty words,
To vanquish Rakshas might? When I have come
(Though tranished is my glory when I face
Such puny foes) and send my iron hail
Against ye, can ye hope t'escape with life?"[158]

Lakshmana terrifies the demons with the sound of his bow string. Even Ravana feels astonished. Several demons are killed by Lakshmana. His arrows are cut by Ravana's, together with his quiver.[159] Hanuman returns again in his gigantic form telling Ravana:

"But this day, Ravana, will be thy last."[160]

He offers a challenge to Ravana:

"If thou dare to fight with me with fits,
With one blow of my fist I will destroy

154. *Ibid.*, (6-14-54)
155. *Ibid.*, (6-14-67)
156. *Ibid.*, (6-14-78)
157. *Ibid.*, (6-14-129)
158. *Ibid.*, (6-14-139)
159. *Ibid.*, (6-14-159)
160. *Ibid.*, (6-14-161)

Thy strength and skill and fame, and valour high
Renounced! Why waste more words? Although thy frame
Could not be shaken by the mammoth eight,
Or Shiva's hill, canst thou forsooth escape
Alive when thou my matchless Vanar blows
Receivest? If thou die not when I my blows
Deliver, thou may'st, O thou of the rock-like arms,
Return my blow with all thy might, and then,
If I remain alive, I shall no more
Challenge thee on the field."[161]

Ravana accepts the challenge, comes down from his chariot and asks Hanuman to try his fist over his chest. Hanuman strikes with all his might, at which :

"The hills crumble into their component sand; sparks come out of the eyes of the Rakshasas; the brains of other Rakshasas come out of their heads by the knock of the blow; some others fall down dead. * * * The sea dashes upon the shore causing deep breaches; the tusks of the elephants fall down; and sparks and jewels fall down from Ravana's chest".[162]

Ravana feels the severity of the shock and becomes unconscious but soon regains consciousness and praises the physical strength of Hanuman saying :

"I see there is some strength e'en outside me,
And that I find in thee, O mighty one!
* * * *
I own thou hast defeated me! There is
But one test more. If thou canst bear my blow —
The blow which on thy chest like a thunderbolt
Will falling strike — and after that remain
Alive, then thou canst say that there is none
In all the world to equal thee; No foe
Would dare to challange thee and thou wouldst live
For ever and for ever."[163]

161. *Ibid.*, (6-14-164 to 166)
162. *Ibid.*, (6-14-174, 175)
163. *Ibid.*, (6-14-181, 182)

Hanuman offers a tribute to Ravana:

"Hast thou not conquered me when thou art yet
Alive unscatched? I do commend thy strength
Now take thy even chance."[164]

So saying Hanuman stands erect with his chest open. Ravana fists him with all his strength. Sparks come out and Hanuman reels and with him reel Dharma, Truth, Nobility, Vedas, Justice, Fame and Ruth. Ravana sends a shower of iron rain destroying a great part of the army of monkeys. Even Angada, Jambavan and Nala are pierced by his darts. Lakshmana with ten sharp arrows cut the ten bows of Ravana[165] who admires his valour and equals him to Rama or Indrajit. Ravana throws on Lakshmana with all his force the lance (Shakti) given by Brahma. Lakshmana falls unconscious.[166] Gods and sages feel terror-striken. Ravana tries to carry his body but finds it impossible. Hanuman springs up and carries away the body easily. Lakshmana regains his consciousness. Seeing this, Rama decides to face Ravana standing on the shoulders of Hanuman at which even Garuda feels ashamed.[167] Hanuman moves swifter than the thoughts of Rama and in advance of his arrows. Ravana sends seven dreadful darts on Rama and the same are easily cut by seven shafts, and then Rama sends five which are cut by Ravana who sends ten. Rama destroys the ten and then kills the entire army of Ravana saving his own warriors. There remains Ravana alone. In fury he sends a very severe arrow which is again cut by Rama together with his bow. Ravana takes up another bow, which is again destroyed by Rama together with the horses of his chariot, umbrella, flag and the shield. Then Rama shoots down his crowns. He stands with shame bareheaded.[168] Finally Rama gives him a chance and says:

"* * * * Thou hadst
This very day been dead, did not I stay
My arm for pity sake, because thou stand'st
Helpless, alone, upon the field. If canst,

164. *Ibid.*, (6-14-183)
165. *Ibid.*, (6-14-201)
166. *Ibid.*, (6-14-206)
167. *Ibid.*, (6-14-220)
168. *Ibid.*, (6-14-250)

To-morrow bring the flower of thy troops,
Or seek in flight precarious safety. Listen!
If thou send Sita back, and *Svarga's* throne
Restore to Indra, and Vibhishana crown
As Lanka's king thyself his will obeying,
Then I my deadly arrows shall withhold.
But if, preverse, in thy evil thou persist,
Bring all thy strength and face me on the field.
Thy evil soul might turn to good if thou
Should even die by my darts. But think no more
Thou canst return alive from here."[169]

And adds:

"Go ye today and return tomorrow".

Rama and Ravana return to their respective places.

Tulasi: Both the armies march on, shouting victory to their masters. The demons have all sorts of weapons and the monkeys have mountains and trees. The attack begins. Lanka is in confusion and tumult. Demonesses begin abusing Ravana. When Ravana hears of the defeat of demons, he orders that those who retreat from the battlefield will be put to death by him[170], and consequently the demons determine to die in the war-front as brave warriors. Hanuman jumps over a tower and throws a big mountain on Indrajit and destroys his chariot and kills the driver and kicks him on the chest. Angada climbs over the fort and then with Hanuman over the palace of Ravana and destroys the same. This sets fear in Ravana. The demonesses cry that two monkeys have come for greater destruction. The two attack demon army cutting and throwing their heads before Ravana, and throw the leaders before Rama who despatches them direct to heaven.[171] When evening sets in, the two come to Rama on whose sight they are refreshed. Demons get more spirited after sun-set and launch their vigorous attack headed by Akampana and Atikaya. They use their magical powers and create darkness, bring rain of blood, stones and ashes. Rama sends an arrow of fire which spreads light everywhere.[172] The demons are quickly thrown into the ocean.

169. *Ibid.*, (6-14-252 to 255)
170. Ram Charit **Manas** (6-62-4)
171. *Ibid.*, (6-65-1)
172. *Ibid.*, (6-67-2)

In Valmiki, after a general combat, there are battles between individuals. The earth gets red with blood. Shukasharana runs away from the field. The demons at night come out in their spirits and in their invisible form swallow several monkeys. Rama dispells the darkness with an arrow. Angada destroys the chariot, driver and the horses of Indrajit who becomes invisible assuming the form of smoke and showers innumerable darts over monkeys. He then throws the 'Nagastra' (the Serpent Dart) at Rama and Lakshmana and binds them motionless.[173] All get frightened. Now Ravana sends word to Sita that Rama and Lakshmana are dead. She is flown over, and shown around.[174] She becomes heart-broken and feels specially for Kaushalya.[175] Trijata disples her fears and takes her back to Ashoka garden. After a little while Rama slowly wakes up, but seeing Lakshmana, he becomes grief-striken and says that one may perhaps find many ladies like Sita but not a brother like Lakshmana. He feels like dying and asks Sugriva to return to Kishkindha with the remaining army[176] and falls unconscious. Sugriva tells Sushena, his father-in-law that he may take Rama and Lakshmana to Kishkindha for treatment and that meanwhile he will continue the war and return only after killing Ravana and setting free Sita. Garuda, the vulture God, hovers in human form, cuts the Nagastra into pieces and reveals the tricks and strategems of the demons. Rama embraces him.[177] Seeing Rama and Lakshmana resuming the war, monkeys fight with double zeal. Ravana sends his generals one after another. Dhumraksha and Akampana are killed by Hanuman and Vajradamshtra by Angada. Ravana goes round the battle-field and sees his forces and orders Prahastha, the commander-in-chief, to march but Prahastha dies at the hands of Neela.[178] Ravana himself comes with demons of extraordinary strength. Ravana with an arrow renders Sugriva unconscious. Hanuman challenges him to receive and return one fist to evaluate their comparative strength. Ravana hits first and Hanuman returns. Hanuman does shiver but Ravana admires his enormous might. Hanuman feels sorry that his fist had not brought Ravana's end. Later Lakshmana breaks his bow. Ravana throws on

173. **Valmiki Ramayana (6-45)**
174. ***Ibid.*, (6-47)**
175. ***Ibid.*, (6-48)**
176. ***Ibid.*, (6-49)**
177. ***Ibid.*, (6-50)**
178. ***Ibid.*, (6-58)**

Lakshmana the unfailing 'Shakti' got from Brahma. Lakshmana collapses and Shakti returns to Ravana. Ravana tries to carry him away but finds it impossible. Hanuman easily carries him to the camp. Rama himself comes riding on Hanuman's shoulders. Ravana tries first to strike down Hanuman but Rama cuts all his arrows and destroys his chariot, horses and driver together with the flag and the royal umbrella. Then a set of very sharp shafts pierces his chest making him tremble with fear. But Rama still with compassion, asks him to go and come again with all his forces well equipped.[179] Ravana returns humiliated and faint-hearted. He feels sorry at his boon, for it does not cover death at the hands of man. He also thinks of the curses of Vedavati, Uma, Nandikeswara and Rambha.

In Adhyatma, the scene is very short. With Rama as the head, the monkeys become doubly strong and in a short time three-fourths of the demon army are destroyed.[180] Indrajit sends the 'Brahmastra' (the weapon given by Brahma to him) on the monkeys. Rama in deference to the holiness of the weapon,[181] keeps silent for a moment but later takes his bow. Indrajit suddenly runs away into the city. Rama now asks Hanuman to bring the Drona mountain from the ocean of milk so that the monkeys may get back their lives. The same is brought, and all the monkeys resume their activities.[182] Ravana orders all his warriors to war on pain of death. Out of fear of Ravana they all get into the battle-field with arms and weapons. Atikaya, Prahastha, Devashatru, Nikumbha, Devantaka, Nirantaka, etc.[183] die in the field at the hands of different warriors.[184].

The following are the noteworthy points on a comparative study :

(a) In Kambar, Hanuman tries his fist on Ravana first and then Ravana. In Valmiki the order is reversed. Adhyatma and Tulasi do not mention this.

179. *Ibid.*, (6-59)
180. Adhyatma Ramayana (6-5-64).
181. *Ibid.*, (6-5-67)
182. *Ibid.*, (6-5-74, 75).
183. *Ibid.*, (6-5-79, 80).
184. *Ibid.*, (6-5-84).

(b) Lakshmana's combat with Ravana finds place only in Kambar.

(c) In Kambar, Ravana shoots down Lakshmana unconscious with the Brahmastra whereafter he tries to carry him off. Tulasi does not mention any such incident. In Valmiki, Indrajit uses Nagastra here and not Brahmastra. In Adhyatma, Indrajit uses the Brahmastra but it affects only the monkeys and Rama asks Hanuman to bring the Drona Mountain from the sea of Milk and the monkeys come back to life.

(d) In Tulasi, Malyavan advises Ravana only here over which Ravana asks him brutally not to show his face to him in future.

(e) The initial fight between Rama and Ravana is depicted by Kambar following Valmiki, and is not found in Adhyatma or Tulasi.

(f) In Kambar and Tulasi, Rama and Lakshmana together with their monkeys are not bound here by the Nagastra by Indrajit. It comes later. So also in Adhyatma Ramayana. It finds place only in Valmiki. So also Ravana causes Sita to be shown the condition of Rama and Lakshmana fallen on the battle-field.

7. *Kumbhakarna's Fight to Death* :

Kambar : Ravana goes back with a down-cast face and is ashamed that Sita may laugh at him.[185] Ravana tells Malyavan of the happenings. He advises him to return Sita lest he should be killed. Meanwhile Mahodara comes and encourages him to wage war assuring him of final success and not to send back Sita lest his fame should suffer.[186] Ravana appreciates Mahodara's advice and orders Kumbhakarna to be awakened from his sleep. His messengers try to awake him with hands, sticks and horses' kicks but with no result. An army itself of one thousand warriors tries but he gets deeper sleep due to the kicking of the horses. Lances without sharp ends are used by a thousand warriors simultaneously

185. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (6-15-11)
186. *Ibid.*, (6-15-38)

at his head and cheeks. He then gets up as one awakening after death.[187] Finding nothing to eat immediately after sleep, Kumbhakarna's face begins to fade. But soon six hundred cart-loads of rice and meat, and casks full of wine together with one thousand and two hundred fried buffalows are offered to him for breakfast. He finishes them in no time. On being told by the messengers, he goes and bows to Ravana who embraces Kumbhakarna. He is fed again with meat and wine in a greater measure and is richly clothed and adorned with diamonds, ornaments etc. Ravana himself puts on him weapons of war at which he seeks for the reason. Ravana tells him that two men have surrounded the city with their army and that he has to destroy them. Kumbhakarna well remembers the words of Vibhishana and states at the very outset:

"Is war begun, and grief of Sita, chaste
Beyond compare, is it unended yet?
Is our good name that filled the earth and heaven
Become a story of the past? And day
Of our final down foretold, has it begun
To dawn? ... ..."[188]

Kumbhakarna candidly expresses his opinion against Ravana's action and concludes:

"Destruction hangs o'er thee and all thy house,
Inevitable."[189]

He is sure that his foes are following the path of righteousness and says:

"Thy foes are full of ruth, their every act is based
on Dharma and courtesy is in their speech."[190]

He foresees that due to his guile, untruth and sin, Ravana is sure to lose the battle. Kumbhakarna finally tells Ravana:

"* * * * If thou would hear, 't 'll do
Thee good. If thou would not, I fear thy fate

187. *Ibid.*, (6-15-56).
188. *Ibid.*, (6-15-79).
189. *Ibid.*, (6-15-83).
190. *Ibid.*, (6-15-85).

Is doomed. So send this damsel to her spouse
And falling at his feet, conciliate
Thy brother and live in peace. If this thou hatest
To do, and dost decide to fight to th' end,
Battle at least with all thy forces joined,
And try to overwhelm the foe."[191]

Nothing of this enters Ravana's head. He tells him that he has been called not for consultation but only to fight the enemy and accuses him of cowardliness 'though fed with mountains of food and lakes of wine'. He asks him to shake off his slumber and either to fight or follow Vibhishana and fall at the feet of the men and monkeys. So saying Ravana starts for the war-front, but Kumbhakarna stops him apologising and falls at his feet,[192] and then starts saying:

"* * * * 'Tis fate
That drives me on. This day will be my last
Upon the earth. But brother, at least when I'm
No more, release the human damsel fair.
I see no other way."[193]

He also states, as if with 'a prophetic vision', that Indrajit will be killed by Lakshmana and all others will also meet with death. At the end Kumbhakarna expressing his eternal loyalty to the brother and king, says:

"If from our childhood upto now, my king, I have
Ever offended thee, I pray to thee
With folded hands, forgive thy erring brother
My heart doth tell me, brother, this meeting is
Our last. These eyes, alas, will look no more
Upon thy dear face! I take thy leave!"[194]

With tearful eyes Ravana and all his people see Kumbhakarna march towards the battle-field with a very big army. Heaps of meat and pots of wine are brought for him to eat and drink.

191. *Ibid.*, (6-15-88, 89)
192. *Ibid.*, (6-15-94)
193. *Ibid.*, (6-15-95)
194. *Ibid.*, (6-15-98)

Seeing him, Rama learns his true nature from Vibhishana. At Sugriva's suggestion,[195] Rama sends Vibhishana[196] to see if Kumbhakarna could not be won over. Kumbhakarna is happy to see Vibhishana for the last time after separation, but thinking that he had deserted Rama, feels sorry,[197] and asks him why he left the side where love and righteousness dwell, and says that fate is taking Ravana to an immediate end, and advises him to go back:

"Go back, therefore, to Raghava
And enter Lanka after it is purged
Of all this sinful crew; and, crowned by Ram
Enjoy a reign of glory unsurpassed".[198]

Vibhishana suggests that he also may surrender to Rama 'to save himself from the cycle of birth and death', adding that the crown of Lanka will be his, for he is elder. Recalling the story of Parashurama, Shiva and Brahma, Vibhishana says:

"For crime of one, shall we that know no guilt
Ruin ourselves by fighting on his side."[199]

"x x x x x Shall we
Support a heinous crime and choose the way
That leads to hell? The flesh diseased that grows
Upon our body we cut off and burn
If we would keep the body whole."[200]

"x x x x x Perhaps
Thou thinkest it disgrace to owe thy crown
To Ram. But know that He is God of gods
Himself. Who's born as man to 'stablish Dharm
x x x"[201]

" 'Tis he that in the fulness of his love
And mercy sent me here. Do e'er the wise

195. *Ibid.*, (6-15-127)
196. *Ibid.*, (6-15-128)
197. *Ibid.*, (6-15-132)
198. *Ibid.*, (6-15-138)
199. *Ibid.*, (6-15-144)
200. *Ibid.*, (6-15-145, 146)
201. *Ibid.*, (6-15-150)

Go gathering flowers when fruits hang ripe upon
The tree? Abandon thou therefore the camp
Of Sin and follow me."[202]

Kumbhakarna's heart melts but his philosophy does not change. He embraces Vibhishana and says with tears:

"Can I refuse to give my life for him
Who all these years has cherished me, and now
Has sent me to the field to fight? Is life
So dear, that's transient as the wave-lets playing
On the flowing stream? So if thou want'st to heal
My sorrow, brother, tarry not, but do
Return to Ram."[203]

His Problem is:

"x x x x x And can I brooke
Ev'n I who have defeated the God of Death
Himself — Can I consent to pass my days,
Singing with an aching heart the praise of him
Who will have pierced my brother's mighty chest?"[204]

He is determined to fight to death which is inevitable. He further says:

"x x x x x Think not I can be turned
From my resolve by further words. Now go."[205]

He asks Vibhishana to perform certain ceremonies according to scriptures to save them from hell. His words to Vibhishana come out with eyes full of tears. "This day doth break for ev'r the tie that bound us from our childhood's days!"[206] Vibhishana returns to Rama who points to the inexorable nature of destiny.[207] Battle starts. Numerous monkeys and demons die. Onslaughts by Nala and Angada are repulsed by Kumbhakarna. The mountains

202. *Ibid.*, (6-15-153)
203. *Ibid.*, (6-15-155)
204. *Ibid.*, (6-15-160)
205. *Ibid.*, (6-15-164)
206. *Ibid.*, (6-15-167)
207. *Ibid.*, (6-15-171)

are powdered with ease by Kumbhakarna. Angada catches hold of the terrible mace thrown by him. Kumbhakarna seeing his great prowess asks who he is. Angada replies:

"Know me to be the son of him who caught
Thy brother with his vice-like tail, and flew
Lightly to th' oceans four to worship Shiva,
The while thy brother breathless struggled against
His strangling hold."[208]

Angada says that he has come to kill him and lifting with his tail place his carcass at Rama's feet. Kumbhakarna laughs and taunts:

"Thy thought is just x x x x x
For verily the world will laugh at thee
If thou fight not for him who from a cover
Concealed did kill thy parent innocent
With a single dart."[209]

He adds that he cannot even dream of touching him. Angada strikes with the captured mace at Kumbhakarna, but it breaks into pieces. Kumbhakarna aims a fist at Angada falling him down senseless. Angada is removed from the battle-field and Hanuman takes his place and throws mountains on him with no effect. Hanuman retreats and Lakshmana comes on his shoulders. Kumbhakarna swears,

"x x x x x I shall cleave
In twain the sacrilegious hands that dared
To hold my sister by the hair and her
Deformed!"[210]

So saying he sends innumerable arrows which are all cut by Lakshmana's swifter shafts together with his war-chariot, his bow and also the fresh reinforcements sent by Ravana. Kumbhakarna begins fighting with Sugriva and catches him by the hand. He runs towards his fort with the unconscious Sugriva[211] but is stopped

208. *Ibid.*, (6-15-192)
209. *Ibid.*, (6-15-193)
210. *Ibid.*, (6-15-235)
211. *Ibid.*, (6-15-268)

by Rama by erecting a wall of arrows.[212] Kumbhakarna turns back and tells Rama that he is neither Kabandha nor Vali, and that he has been long waiting for him, for others have already been defeated. He thanks his stars and says:

"x x x x x I mean to send
Thee to the doom that others of our foes
Have found before and free my brother's heart
Of all anxiety."[213]

Rama laughs and says:

"x x x x x If I cannot cleave in two
Those arms that captured have my friend and brother,
I shall hold myself beaten: I shall fight
No more with thee".[214]

So saying Rama sends two sharp shafts which strike on the forehead of Kumbhakarna felling him unconscious and bringing out blood like streams. The warm blood helps Sugriva to regain consciousness and he hastens to Rama after biting the nose and ears, of Kumbhakarna.[215] When Kumbhakarna comes back to sense, he is ashamed to see Sugriva escaped, and with great rage attacks Rama and the monkeys with his sword and buckler. Rama disarms him in no time, but he gets fresh weapons immediately. Rama asks him either to join him or run away to Lanka and save his life. Kumbhakarna cares not for the words of Rama and says that it is impossible for him to join one who disfigured his sister when she had none to help. He asks:

"x x x x x Having ta'en the field
For to drink thy blood, and let my brother win
The fair he loves, now shall I move the gods
To laughter by lamentations loud addressed
E'en like my sister to my brother?"[216]

212. *Ibid.*, (6-15-276).
213. *Ibid.*, (6-15-284)
214. *Ibid.*, (6-15-286)
215. *Ibid.*, (6-15-291)
216. *Ibid.*, (6-15-330)

He says that though Rama may be unique in the three worlds, he is only a man, and asks him:

"x x x x x Know'st not
The duties of the knight, whate'er his race
Or clime? Then tell me have I other course
Than fall on thee and take thy head from off
Thy trunk."[217]

So saying he throws a very huge mountain on Rama, which is broken to pieces by Rama's arrows. Rama also breaks his dreadful lance and shield. Unable to do any harm to Rama, Kumbhakarna takes a sword and a shield and begins destroying the monkeys in thousands. An arrow from Rama severs his right arm.[218] He however continues to kill the monkeys with his left hand though a river of blood was flowing from his huge body. Rama's arrow cuts off his left hand also but he begins kicking and crushing the monkeys to death with legs. Another arrow of Rama cuts one of his legs. Still with the other leg, he leaps and finishes a large number. That leg is also cut and he lifts some rocks with his tongue and throws on the monkeys. Rama is surprised at his sense of brotherly duty. Kumbhakarna mentally vails:

"A thousand Ravanas ev'n cannot suffice
To stand against my Lord and win: and here
I lie, an armless, legless trunk and see
No way to further aid my brother. A life
Of endless joy and luxury was his:
Alas, I see its end approach, brought on
By lust unholy."[219]

At the end he prays to Rama 'as Supreme God' to take care of Vibhishana and protect him, as he is a descendent of the Emperor Shibi who once offered the flesh of his body to save a dove.[220] Again for himself he submits:

"x x x x x Let not
The Rishis and the gods deride me, Sire,

217. *Ibid.*, (6-15-331)
218. *Ibid.*, (6-15-339)
219. *Ibid.*, (6-15-354).
220. *Ibid.*, (6-15-356, 357)

For my face deformed; so shoot thy powerful dart
Clean through my neck, and my severed head
To sink beneath the sea beyond the ken
Of living kind."[221]

Rama takes pity on him and carries out his request by sending his head to sink into the sea.[222] The gods feel happy.

Tulasi: Ravana consults his ministers as over half of his forces had died out.[223] Malyavan advises him to follow the sacred lawful path by returning Sita and taking to the worship of Rama.[224] The words only prick Ravana like arrows and he asks him not to show his face again. Malyavan leaves immediately feeling insulted, and thinking of Ravana's ill-luck.

* * * * * *

Tulasi here narrates Indrajit throwing the Shakti over Lakshmana, Hanuman's bringing Sanjeevi Hill and Lakshmana's regaining consciousness. Kumbhakarna's fight is described next.

* * * * * *

Ravana hears that Lakshmana has come back to his consciousness and is greatly grieved. He wakes up Kumbhakarna 'with greatest difficulties' adopting various methods and tells the whole story from the abduction of Sita. Kumbhakarna is so shocked and strongly condemns Ravana's action:

"You fool, do you expect a prosperous issue after carrying off the Mother of the World?[225] You have done ill, O demon King! And why have you come to waken me now?".

He then advises him:

"Even now, brother, swallow your pride and worship Rama; then all will be well. Can Raghunayak be no more than a man, Ten-headed, when one like Hanuman

221. *Ibid.*, (6-15-360)
222. *Ibid.*, (6-15-361, 362)
223. Ram Charit Manas (6-68-2)
224. *Ibid.*, (6-70-1)
225. *Ibid.*, (6-84)

> is his messenger? Alas, brother, you have acted very foolishly in not coming and telling me about this before. You have picked a quarrel, Sire, with that deity whom Shiva, Brahma and all the gods adore. I would have told you of the information that Narada the sage imparted to me, but now it is too late. Now, brother, embrace me, for I go to see what most I long to see — the dark-hued lotus-eyed deliverer from all pain."[226]

Kumbhakarna meditates on the beauty and virtue of Rama and is immersed in the thought for a moment. After drinking a crore pots of wine and an equal amount of buffalow's meat got by Ravana, he moves on for war roaring like thunder without any army with him. Vibhishana tells him the cause of quitting Lanka. Kumbhakarna states that he is truly blessed in having come to Rama's feet 'the ocean of beauty and bliss' and asks him to go back leaving him to die fighting.[227] Monkeys assault Kumbhakarna with hills with no effect whatsoever. Now Hanuman and Kumbhakarna exchange a firm fist on each other and Hanuman falls on the earth and faints.[228] Similarly Nala, Neela and Angada are also felled unconscious. Sugriva is held tight under his arm but slips out gaining his consciousness and bites his nose and ears.[229] Kumbhakarna gets furious as death and swallows numberless monkeys 'like locusts that enter and fill a mountain cave'. Myriads of bears and monkeys he crushes. Now starts Rama. The very twang of his bow deafens the demons and his arrows cut all the demons on the battle-field. Kumbhakarna throws mountains fiercely on the monkeys. Rama simply powders the mountains, and another volley of arrows get through the body of Kumbhakarna and returns back to the quiver. He throws a very huge mountain on Rama but it is cut to pieces and his right hand is severed by a sharp shaft. He runs with a mountain in the left arm and that is also cut with another shaft. Still the demon tries to swallow Rama and the entire army with a wide open mouth but Rama's arrows fill his mouth. Still he approaches and Rama severs

226. *Ibid.*, (6-85-1 to 6-85-4)
227. *Ibid.*, (6-86)
228. *Ibid.*, (6-87-3)
229. *Ibid.*, (6-88-3)

his head with a keen shaft and the same falls before Ravana.[230] Now the trunk begins running and Rama with another arrow cuts it into two and there fall two mountains crushing more monkeys, bears and demons too beneath them.[231] Gods and monkeys feel extremely happy and Ravana is plunged in grief.

In Valmiki, Ravana after the initial defeat at the hands of Rama returns with shame and ponders over the lacuna in the boon, i.e., the elimination of death at the hands of man. He also recalls the curse of Vedavati and the words of Brahma, king Anaranya, Parvati, Nandi, Shiva, Rambha and the daughter of Varuna. Then he causes Kumbhakarna to be awkened though it was only the ninth day of his sleep. He gets up only when elephants are run over him and has a sumptuous meal of meat of the deer, buffalo, pig, rice etc. heaped like mountains and blood and drinks in plentiful measure. He is then appraised of the situation. He goes to meet Ravana.[232] There Vibhishana informs Rama about Kumbhakarna. Rama asks the army to get ready.[233] Kumbhakarna condemns Ravana's actions and advises him to follow the right path but Mahodara interferes and assures them of success.[234] Kumbhakarna abuses Mahodara for his ill-advice. Finding Ravana appreciating Mahodara, Kumbhakarna leaves for war with all his weapons and his favourite spear. He marches like a mountain in motion. Monkeys get terrified but Angada encourages them. The great demon destroys and swallows thousands of monkeys powdering the mountains thrown on him. He attacks Hanuman with the spear. Hanuman falls vomitting blood. Angada also falls senseless. Next when he uses the same spear on Sugriva, Hanuman breaks it into pieces. But a rock from the demon renders Sugriva unconscious and he carries him away, but when he regains consciousness he slips out and comes back after biting the ears and nose of Kumbhakarna. After a combat with Lakshmana he goes to face Rama. A long and severe fight ensues with exchange of deadly weapons. At the end his head is severed and thrown into the sea.[235] Ravana gets despondent.

230. *Ibid.,* (6-93-3)
231. *Ibid.,* (6-93-4)
232. Valmiki Ramayana (6-60)
233. *Ibid.,* (6-61)
234. *Ibid.,* (6-64)
235. *Ibid.,* (6-67)

In Adhyatma Ramayana, the scene appears after Lakshmana recovers consciousness after administration of the herbs of the Drona Hills brought by Hanuman after killing Kalanemi on the way. Ravana gets the sleeping Kumbhakarna awakened[236] with great difficulty and relates the situation to him and asks him to kill Rama, Sugriva and others. Kumbhakarna laughs boisterously, and tells that Rama is the Supreme God Narayana Himself and Sita the 'Yogamaya'. He then mentions his former talks with Narada and advises him to worship Rama with sincere devotion leaving off his evil traits.[237] Ravana is not prepared to give up Sita and forces Kumbhakarna to go to war. He goes to the battlefield. He meets Vibhishana after killing many monkeys, and embraces him. He advises him to stick to his devotion to Rama and ensure the continuance of his own race. Vibhishana returns. In the fight Rama cuts off his hands and legs, and his head falls at the gates of Lanka and his body in the sea immersing Ravana in an ocean of distress. Narada comes and sings Rama's glory.

On a comparative study the following appear to be the salient features of the scene —

(a) Kambar puts the death of Kumbhakarna immediately after the initial fight of Rama and Ravana. In Tulasi, this scene is brought in after Hanuman brings the Sanjeevi mountain and Lakshmana gets back to life. Evidently Kambar has followed Valmiki and Tulasidas Adhyatma Ramayana.

(b) Kambar and Tulasidas here introduce the good advice of Malyavan and the contrary one by Mahodara to Ravana. This is not found in Valmiki and Adhyatma.

(c) The details of Kumbhakarna's diet are not found only in Adhyatma Ramayana.

(d) The methods adopted in waking up Kumbhakarna are detailed in Kambar following Valmiki, but not in Tulasi and Adhyatma.

(e) The attitude of Kumbhakarna is described differently in the different works.

236. Adhyatma Ramayana (6-7-49)
237. *Ibid.*, (6-7-66)

(f) In Kambar, Kumbhakarna goes to the war-front with a big army but in Tulasi he goes alone. Kambar follows Valmiki and Tulasidas Adhyatma Ramayana.

(g) 'The prophetic vision' of Kumbhakarna in foretelling the death of Indrajit and all others is stated only by Kambar.

(h) The apology of Kumbhakarna in having wounded the feelings of Ravana is mentioned only by Kambar.

(i) Only in Kambar, Sugriva suggests that Kumbhakarna may be asked to surrender, and Vibhishana volunteers himself for the job. The meeting of the two brothers here is picturesque and touching. In other epics also Vibhishana and Kumbhakarna meet on the battle-field but before the fight between him and Rama begins.

(j) In Kambar and Tulasi, Sugriva is caught and taken by Kumbhakarna to Lanka but slips away after biting his nose and ears as found in Valmiki. Adhyatma Ramayana does not mention this. So also the fight of Lakshmana is omitted in Adhyatma Ramayana.

(k) Only Kambar mentions the divine vision got by Kumbhakarna just before the time of his death, when he says that even a thousand Ravanas cannot suffice to stand against 'his Lord'. He also requests 'his Lord — the Supreme God' to take care of Vibhishana.

(l) In Tulasi, Kumbhakarna knows Rama and Sita to be incarnations of the Supreme Being Narayana and Yogamaya respectively as in Adhyatma Ramayana. In Kambar, Kumbhakarna realises only a little before his death about Rama being the 'Supreme God'. In Valmiki, he never understands that Rama is 'God incarnate' though he disapproves of the action of Ravana as sinful from the very beginning.

8. *Maya Janaka and Sita:*

This scene is found only in Kamba Ramayanam and is placed immediately after the death of Kumbhakarna.

Ravana consults Mahodara about a device to win Sita. Mahodara immediately suggests that, if a false Janaka, bound, is taken

before Sita, she may agree to his wish to see her father released.[238] Ravana appreciates the suggestion, goes to Sita and repeas the same old words of love, which Sita turns down stating that Rama alone is her life. Ravana says that he is sure to win Rama in the war and adds that he has already sent his forces to Ayodhya and Mithila too.[239] Sita feels pained. Mahodara at that time brings there a demon in the form of a false Janaka, bound and weeping. Sita feels miserable and swoons. Ravana thinks that this is the most opportune moment and appeals to Sita to fulfil his desire and thereby get all his properties to Janaka himself. Ravana gets an answer just contrary to his expectation. Sita speaks about the littleness of Ravana and adds that Rama and Lakshmana shall very shortly come and put an end to his life. Ravana gets furious. Rubbing his twenty hands and biting his lips he rushes upon Sita. But Mahodara stops him saying that if Janaka would tell his daughter, she may yield.[240] Consequently the false Janaka tells Sita to agree to the wish of Ravana considering his own critical situation.[241] Sita closes her ears with her hands and becomes unconscious. After coming to herself, she states that such words can never come out of the mouth of her father and that the person so speaking should necessarily be some one other than her father. She pointedly says that a lioness can never live with a jackal leaving her lion.[242] Now Ravana orders that false Janaka be assasinated in order to frighten Sita, but she feels not the least and says that Ravana will be killed by Rama not in the distant future. Mahodara stops Ravana from assasinating the false Janaka, when the voice of the gods rejoicing is heard consequent on the death of Kumbhakarna. Messengers bring the news and Ravana faints. He then laments:

> "* * * * * O first of Rakshasas!
> Lived I so long alone to hear these words?
> O thou of the flashing lance, thy dear face
> Is hid from me: I speak these words and yet
> I cling to life! If thou hast gone, O brother,

238. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (6-16-3)
239. *Ibid.*, (6-16-28).
240. *Ibid.*, (6-16-62)
241. *Ibid.*, (6-16-62)
242. *Ibid.*, (6-16-68)

In the hardness of thy heart abandoning me
Who will believe again in brotherhood's love?"[243]

"While thou wert marching proud in victory
To victory, I had my fill of the joy
Of life, but now that thou art dead, my brother,
I do not care to live. I cannot live
Alone, nor shall I let thee go alone:
I come, my elephant proud, I come, I come."[244]

Sita feels happy to hear Ravana thus lamenting. Ravana gets angry at her, but pacified by his ministers, goes back followed by Mahodara. Trijata consoles Sita and tells her that what she saw was only a false Janaka.

Besides the imaginative power of Kambar in this scene, another noteworthy feature is the lament of Ravana over his dead brother Kumbhakarna which is so touching as to remind us of the lament of Rama for Lakshmana when he falls unconscious on the battle-field due to the Brahmastra.

9. *Atikaya's Death*:

Kambar has devoted a long chapter of 265 stanzas following Valmiki with his own poetic imagination. Tulasidas does not picturise this scene in detail. As this scene is found only in Kambar and Valmiki, a short summary as depicted by Kambar is given hereunder with a few notes on Valmiki.

Kambar: Disappointed at the failure of the false Janaka strategy and worried by Kumbhakarna's death, Ravana rebukes his ministers and warriors and says that, if they do not have the courage to defeat the enemies who are only men and monkeys, he will himself go and return with victory. His son Atikaya of big physical body offers himself and adds that he shall do to Rama what he did to Ravana by killing Lakshmana.[245] Atikaya goes and sees the headless trunk of his uncle Kumbhakarna and determines to kill Lakshmana. Through a messenger to Rama he invites Lakshmana[246] for fight adding that presents will be given to the monkey if Lakshmana comes.[247] Rama agrees and asks Lakshmana to go.

243. *Ibid.*, (6-16-78, 79)
244. *Ibid.*, (6-16-86)
245. *Ibid.*, (6-17-11)
246. *Ibid.*, (6-17-34)
247. *Ibid.*, (6-17-43)

Vibhishana tells him of the great strength and power of Atikaya and also that Madhu-Kaitabha were born as Kumbhakarna and Atikaya respectively.[248] Rama tells him of the greatness and strength of Lakshmana and asks him also to accompany Lakshmana. The two armies begin action very vigorously. Demon Taruka is killed by Lakshmana, followed by the death of Kala, Kulisha, Kalashanka, Mali and Marutta.[249] Atikaya attacks the monkeys with his elephants, but the attack is nullified by Lakshmana. More elephants are sent by Ravana but all share the same fate. Hanuman assists in killing the elephants and kills Devantaka followed by Trishiras. Seeing the feats of Hanuman, even Atikaya is astonished. Hanuman goes to the western gate. Atikaya attacks Lakshmana. A very severe fight takes place. Lakshmana fights riding over Angada. Atikaya's weapons are all broken with ease by Lakshmana but Atikaya is not killed. The Wind-god advises Lakshmana that Atikaya will die only by Brahmastra. Lakshmana sends the Brahmastra which takes off Atikaya's head through the sky,[250] thereby pleasing gods. Then Narantaka, Pormatta (or Uddhamatta) and others are killed by Angada, Neela and others. Ravana and all demons are immersed in the sea of sorrow. Dhanyamalini, the mother of Atikaya laments bitterly.[251]

In this scene Kambar very closely follows Valmiki including the advise of the Wind-god to Lakshmana to employ Brahmastra. However in Valmiki, Atikaya sends no messenger for Lakshmana, and Vibhishana does not accompany Lakshmana. According to Valmiki, Atikaya directly tells Rama that he will not fight with an ordinary warrior. He challenges any one to come, if he so dares.[252] At these words Lakshmana gets enraged and goes to him with bow and arrow. Atikaya gets ready but takes Lakshmana lightly and tells him that he is only a boy and asks him to get aside. But the war begins ending in the death of Atikaya by the Brahmastra of Lakshmana. Now Ravana begins thinking that Rama is Narayana Himself and asks the demons to guard the city very carefully and the Ashoka Garden.[253]

248. *Ibid.*, (6-17-76)
249. *Ibid.*, (6-17-124)
250. *Ibid.*, (6-17-206)
251. *Ibid.*, (6-17-266 to 273).
252.. Valmiki Ramayana (6-71).
253. *Ibid.*, (6-72).

10. *Indrajit's Exploits and Death* :

Kambar: Hearing of the death of Atikaya and others, Indrajit takes an oath that he will put an end to Lakshmana who has caused so much havoc and that without doing so he will not return from the war front.[254] Ravana advises him to finish Lakshmana by the Nagapasa weapon (the serpent dart) and Indrajit agrees.[255] He starts with full equipment and a very huge army. Lakshmana is only waiting to receive either Ravana or Indrajit. Vibhishana tells Lakshmana that it is Indrajit and that he should be very careful and use his utmost skill. Hanuman and Sugriva assist him. Angada, Jambavan and all at their best help to reduce the strength of the foe considerably. Indrajit gets aside and showers a rain of arrows and kills a very large number of monkeys destroying all the mountains and trees showered on him by Sugriva, Hanuman and others. Hanuman now challenges him to fight with himself or Lakshmana or Rama, and Indrajit expresses his desire to fight with Lakshmana who has killed his brother Atikaya.[256] Through a spy he learns who Lakshmana is and surrounds him but his numberless demons are all killed by Lakshmana with ease, creating confusion among the remaining demons. Fight begins between Lakshmana riding on Hanuman and Indrajit from his chariot. Crores and crores of various types of shafts fly from either side, and Indrajit falls tired and unconscious. Hanuman kills the charioteer and the horses. Indrajit comes in another one but Lakshmana breaks down that chariot also. The next chariot is destroyed by Angada. Meanwhile Lakshmana kills lakhs of demons. Indrajit himself expresses surprise at the fighting of Lakshmana. Again Indrajit and Lakshmana come face to face and the shield of Indrajit is shot to pieces. Evening sets in and on the advise of Vibhishana, Lakshmana tries to kill Indrajit, but he flies into the sky above assuming a very small form thereby creating a false impression that he has flown away. Lakshmana gets down for a minute of rest, when the 'Nagastra' sent by Indrajit ties him up very severely round his neck.[257] So also each and every arrow sent by him becomes a serpent and binds Hanuman, Angada, Sugriva and all the other monkey forces present

254. Kamba Ramayanam (6-18-9).
255. *Ibid.*, (6-18-14, 15).
256. *Ibid.*, (6-18-75, 76).
257. *Ibid.*, (6-18-189).

there. All get immense pain and fall unconscious. Indrajit in person, informs his father who embraces him appreciating his bravery. Vibhishna and Rama are greatly perturbed to hear of the sad news. There was complete darkness in the battle-field. Rama with an Agneyastra (a shaft of fire) gets the field illuminated and sees the sad state of Lakshmana and cries aloud, "O Lakshmana! O Lakshmana!" and placing his hand under him, cries, "Are you not living, my child ?" He feels desperate under extreme suffering.[258] He turns hard upon Vibhishana for not calling him to fight with the foe. Vibhishana tells him of the mischievous deceipt played by Indrajit, and adds that, as none has died, they may all get their lives back, if the 'Nagapasha' is removed. Rama expresses his determination to die, should Lakshmana's life is not revived.[259] Now Garuda, the vulture God, seeing the seriousness of the situation, comes immediately and sings the glory of Rama. Then he comes near Rama and the serpents vanish automatically and even the scars on the body of Lakshmana and the monkeys disappear.[260] Lakshmana and the monkeys get back their lives and rise up to the pleasant surprise of Rama. Rama thanks Garuda who says that he is one of his old friends and that every thing will be known after the demise of the demons. The monkeys express their joy and shout aloud. Ravana hears the same, and mocks at Indrajit who is frightened, and again Indrajit gets ready with the top leaders and a very huge army consisting of chariots, elephants, horses, etc. Hanuman kills Tremiraksha; Angada finishes Mahaparshva; Mali's shoulders are cut by Lakshmana followed by the death of Yagyaha; Suryashatru meets his end at the hands of Sugriva; Vajradamshtha is struck dead by Hanuman; Pishaca is finished by Lakshmana by his arrow of Wind (Vayu-astra). Sita now gets some good omens.[261] The Makaraksha, son of Khara, is killed by Rama inspite of all his tactics.[262] On hearing the demise of the top warriors, Ravana calls Indrajit. Indrajit assures his father that he will certainly kill the men and the monkeys,[263] and turns to the war-front with a bigger force, roaring at the pitch

258. *Ibid.*, (6-18-225).
259. *Ibid.*, (6-18-242)
260. *Ibid.*, (6-18-263. 264).
261. *Ibid.*, (6-19-101).
262. *Ibid.*, (6-20).
263. *Ibid.*, (6-21-3).

of his voice. Rama and Lakshmana on the shoulders of Hanuman and Angada respectively go to the forefront with the monkeys. The battle begins with all fierceness. Indrajit is astonished to see the elephants and a very great part of the forces falling down by the innumerable sharp swift shafts of the men. Now Lakshmana takes an oath that he will behead Indrajit,[264] lest the world should think that Indrajit had defeated him by his Nagapasha. He wages a vigorous fight. Rama's shower of shafts isolates Indrajit. Indrajit cries out to Lakshmana that he will do the funeral ceremony of his brothers and uncle with his blood and of Rama.[265] Lakshmana replies that it will be only Vibhishana that will be celebrating his funeral and that of his father too.[266] A dreadful fight commences. Lakshmana breaks the chariot of Indrajit who flies into the sky and becomes invisible. Lakshmana tells Rama that he will employ the Brahmastra but Rama stops him from doing so lest it should burn the three worlds.[267] But Indrajit goes into Lanka for getting prepared to use the Brahmastra. Rama, Lakshmana and all the monkeys get dispersed thinking that the enemy has run away due to fear. Rama sends Vibhishana for food to be served for all.[268] Vibhishana leaves and Rama goes for prayers asking Lakshmana to take care of the army. Indrajit tells Ravana that, as the situation is tense, he is going to use Brahmastra. Ravana agrees and sends Mahodara with another set of a very strong army. The demons suddenly start the fight. Each monkey kills at least four or five demons. The dead monkeys get transformed into gods and relieve the pangs of long separation of goddesses.[269] So also the demons attain heavenly forms by the death at the hands of Lakshmana. Hanuman and Akampana fight and the later dies.[270] All get distributed. Hanuman searches for Lakshmana and finds him not. Then by the Pasupathastra sent by Lakshmana, they are able to see the monkeys. Now Ravana is informed about the sorrowful situation of the demons and information is sent to Indrajit. Indrajit performs sacrifice and gets ready for using the Brahmastra. He comes flying concealing himself

264. *Ibid.*, (6-21-41).
265. *Ibid.*, (6-21-66).
266. *Ibid.*, (6-21-67).
267. *Ibid.*, (6-21-81).
268. *Ibid.*, (6-21-88).
269. *Ibid.*, (6-21-110).
270. *Ibid.*, (6-21-139).

from even the gods. Meanwhile Mahodara assumes the form of Indra and the demons those of sages and monks, and begin attacking the monkeys. Lakshmana is astonished and asks Vibhishana the cause of their attack. At this time Indrajit hits Lakshmana with the Brahmastra. Lakshmana and the monkeys fall on the ground unconscious. A big number go to heaven but are asked to go back for killing the demons.[271] Indrajit blows his trumpet of victory and goes to his father. Rama comes to the battle-field and seeing Hanuman, Sugriva and Angada lying unconscious, blames himself. Then he sees Lakshmana and is greatly distressed. He faints on the ground shivering like a great tree.[272] Even gods get immersed in grief. Rama after gaining consciousness thinks that Lakshmana is dead and cries bitterly saying:

"I died not when I heard of our father's death
Though he a kingdom gave, for in thy love
I learned to forget his loss: but, thee now dead,
What's life to me? I come, my brother, I come."[273]

Then Rama says that he has been to him a child, a father and a mother. He feels he is very cruel, for even after the death of such a brother, he is still living. Blaming himself and the sacrifice made by Lakshmana, Rama says:

"My heart is made of stone, it breaketh not:
E'en thy loss I shall bear and cling to life!
In all these fourteen years of forest life,
Through sun or shower, thou labouredst hard for me
And ne'er didst rest: art thou now gone for rest?"[274]

"Thou hadst foresworn e'en sleep: wouldst not awake?
Thy one desire, child, was to see me crowned:
Now op'n thy eyes, behold, I'm grown home-sick;
Take me to Oudh and crown me with thy hands!
Ah wretch I am that knows not what is love
Though losing thee, my brother, I am not dead."[275]

271. *Ibid.*, (6-21-183).
272. *Ibid.*, (6-21-206).
273. *Ibid.*, (6-21-206).
274. *Ibid.*, (6-21-208, 209).
275. *Ibid.*, (6-21-209, 210).

Rama thinks of the misery brought by him on Lakshmana for his love of Sita, and the loss of one who was not only a brother, but also a friend inseparable, and says:

> "Thou wert a brother born but grewest a friend
> Inseparable thou thy father leave
> And mother and Dharm itself and followed'st me.
> But do I follow thee now thou art dead? ....
> Why do I part from thee, and let thee fight
> Alone with Indrajit? I hate myself;
> I hate this life inconstant: I come, I come!
> Behold I follow thee!"[276]

So saying Rama falls on him fainting. The spies of Ravana inform him that both the brothers and the monkeys are lying dead on the battle-field. Ravana proclaims the news to the citizens of Lanka. On his orders the demonesses take Sita over the battle-field and show Rama and Lakshmana and all the monkey army. Sita is greatly worried.[277] She blames the god of righteousness and her own hard fate. She now wants only death. She cries and imagines that this was perhaps in the heart of Kaikeyi, and that the same has been fulfilled.[278] She also thinks of the words of Sumitra and feels that Lakshmana by dying first has implicitly followed the words of his mother.[279] Trijata whispers into her ears, which gives her a picture of the reality beneath the appearances, and makes it worthwhile for her to withhold her life for the time being.[280] After Sita leaves the place, Vibhishana comes with food but is shocked to see the dreadful picture. Then he tries to find out a way to relieve all from the effect of the Brahmastra. With a torch in hand he searches for any one alive. He sees Hanuman and brings him back to consciousness. Hanuman asks for Jambavan to ascertain from him the way to counteract the effects of Brahmastra, for he has no death.[281] Both trace him out and Vibhishana exclaims, "Saved, Saved".[282] Finding Hanuman present,

276. *Ibid.*, (6-21-214, 217).
277. *Ibid.*, (6-22-4).
278. *Ibid.*, (6-22-15).
279. *Ibid.*, (6-22-18).
280. *Ibid.*, (6-22-30).
281. *Ibid.*, (6-23
282. *Ibid.*, (6-23

Jambavan exclaims, "All are saved."[283] Jambavan then advises him to bring the life-giving Sanjeevi medical plants from a hill near the Meru mountains (Himalayas) at a very early moment. Hanuman flies taking a huge form and in no time reaches Himalayas to the great surprise of even the gods. There Shiva shows him to Uma telling her about the purpose of his coming.[284] Hanuman reaches Meru and showing his reverences to Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva and Indra arrives at the mountain of herbs and gets into it with the permission of the gods there. As he could not locate the herbs stated by Jambavan he uproots the very mountain. In the battle-field, Jambavan and Vibhishana meet Rama and see his great agony over the loss of Lakshmana and the state of Sita. Jambavan assures him that all will regain their lives shortly by the herbs to be brought by Hanuman. Rama is heartened and there comes Hanuman with a roar. Lakshmana and all the monkeys get up instantaneously by the mere touch of the wind from the mountain of herbs,[285] but the dead demons had all been thrown into the ocean.[286] Rama embraces Lakshmana to the happines of all including gods and goddesses like Rambha and others. The Brahmastra shows its respect to Rama by going round him, and disappears. Rama embraces Hanuman and extolls him:

> "Once we were born of Dasharatha, O friend,
> But those our bodies now are dead which took
> Their birth from him. And now we're born again
> And thou it is to whom we owe this birth!"[287]

Rama tells him that he has enabled them to fight the enemy again and keep up their vows and honours. As Sita had already blessed him with immortality on receiving the ring, Rama also blesses him now:

> "And as thou didst my brother save, and all
> This host from the jaws of death, may never Death
> Approach thy frame: live thou for ev'r and ev'r.[288]

283. *Ibid.*, (6-23-20).
284. *Ibid.*, (6-23-44, 45).
285. *Ibid.*, (6-23-101, 103).
286. *Ibid.*, (6-23-102).
287. *Ibid.*, (6-23-111).
288. *Ibid.*, (6-23-114).

All the others pay their respects to him and bless him. Jambavan asks Hanuman to take back the mountain and put it again in its own place, and Hanuman does so. There Ravana and the demons and demonesses get immersed in drinking and enjoing dances of damsels Rambha, Menaka etc. Suddenly they hear the big sound of the challenging cry of the monkeys and also the twang of Lakshmana's bow. Ravana hears from the spies the changed position of the enemies and immediately goes to the council hall.[289] Indrajit and others are there and Ravana expresses his sadness. Malyavan again advises him for his good and happy future but he is only rebuked by Ravana. Indrajit still offers hope to his father stating that if he would complete his sacrifice at the temple of Nikumbhila, he will certainly kill both the men and all the monkeys and let his father have peace and pleasure. He suggests:

"By magic art I'll make a breathing shape
Like unto Janaki and sever its head
In sight of Hanuman, and straight proclaim
I fly to Oudh, and for revenge destroy
The city and its king."[290]

By doing so, he says, the men and monkeys will in despair leave the battle field or at least send Hanuman to Ayodhya (Oudh) and stop the war till his return, and by that time the sacrifice at the temple of Nikumbhila will be completed ensuring success. Ravana happily accepts the proposal. Indrajit begins the sacrifice as suggested. Sugriva suggests that Lanka may be burnt to ashes and also begins throwing burning torches into the city, and Lanka is again in flames. Hanuman on his return comes through the western gate, and Indrajit meets him with a Maya Sita (false Sita) and says to him :

"It is for Sita ye are making war:
My father careth not for her, and lo
I spill her blood e'en 'fore your eyes!"[291]

289. *Ibid.*, (6-24-21).
290. *Ibid.*, (6-25-16).
291. *Ibid.*, (6-25-31).

Hanuman gets frightened not knowing Indrajit's strategy. He prays to Indrajit to release her, pointing that it is very shameful for him, a brave warrior belonging to the race of Brahma to kill a woman. He prays for mercy and begs of him saying:

> "* * * * O spare the fair!
> If thou deliver her to me, I'll pray
> That all the worlds may own thee king for ever."[292]

Indrajit laughs boisterously and says:

> "No, I will kill her straight and send my shafts
> That'll make you flee for life, and 'stablish firm
> My father's throne—But all I have not said:
> For I shall first to Oudh and burn her walls;
> Guard her if, e'er ye can! Behold I speed
> Thither: Nor gods can save thy master's mothers
> Or brothers."[293]

So saying he cuts the false Sita and starts with a huge army towards the north. Hanuman faints. Indrajit goes straight to Nikumbhila and begins his sacrifice. Hanuman cries with unbearable distress:

> "The foe does kill that lovely princess pure,
> I see her killed—a woman killed before
> My eyes! — and yet I stand transfixed to the spot
> Even like a bird that has its wings lopped off!"[294]

He laments that people may curse him for all times, though he was able to bring even Rama, back into consciousness when he fainted in the battle-field. He abuses his own fate and past valourous deeds and fame. He prefers to have died with Sita then and there. He immediately runs to Rama and informs him. Rama gets stunned with eyes dried up with no perspiration on body. The monkeys fall unconscious to hear of the sad news. Rama falls on the ground as if dead.[295] Lakshmana also falls on earth. With

292. *Ibid.*, (6-25-36).
293. *Ibid.*, (6-25-39 to 41).
294. *Ibid.*, (6-25-48).
295. *Ibid.*, (6-25-60).

Vibhishana's aid Rama regains consciousness and Lakshmana also pours courage in him. He addresses Rama in 'trumpet-like words'—

"* * * * Dost thou pity feel
For men and gods? What hast thou now to do
With Dharm itself? What care we now for gods
Or Rakshasas, for Gurus, Brahmans, Ved
Itself? When violence prospers in the world
And righteousness in ruin ends, why sit
We here with folded arms? Why hesitate
To end the triple worlds with fire and sword?"[296]

Lakshmana feels that if proper action is not taken against the foes, they may make them slaves and bind in chains and that consequently all may laugh at them. He appeals finally to Rama:

"* * * * Yield not, therefore,
My brother to this unmanly, weak despair;
The portion of the feeble in mind and heart."[297]

Sugriva begins to spring on Lanka, but Hanuman tells what he heard from Indrajit. Rama begins to feel for his mother more than for Sita.[298] But Lakshmana reminds Rama of the great valour of Bharata and consoles him.[299] Vibhishana expresses his doubts in the action of Indrajit and goes to Ashoka garden to verify. He comes with the happy news that all the threat was simply false and that Sita is safe. He also informs that Indrajit is performing a sacrifice at the temple of Nikumbhila.[300] All feel happy. On the suggestion of Vibhishana, Rama sends Lakshmana after an embrace, giving his own Vishnu-bow received from Parashurama, shield and quiver and advising him that on no account he should use Brahmastra. Lakshmana approaches the place at the proper moment with his army of monkeys when Indrajit is just to finish his sacrifice with all the demon armies surrounding him in 'circular formation' called the CHAKRAVYUHA. The fight begins in all seriousness and at their best on both sides. The sacrifice is dis-

296. *Ibid.*, (6-25-66, 67).
297. *Ibid.*, (6-25-71).
298. *Ibid.*, (6-25-80).
299. *Ibid.*, (6-25-84).
300. *Ibid.*, (6-25-96).

turbed. The sacrificial fire is extinguished by the flood of blood. Indrajit sees with terror only corpses and an ocean of blood of his own people and animals and the demons running. He begins thinking that his own end is approaching.[301] But he takes courage and comes forward. Now Hanuman taunts him:

"O Rakshas of a hundred million lies;
I ween I saw thee 'kill our Janaki
And fly to Oudh? When didst thou thence return,
My warrior bold? I hope success has smiled
On thee! I hope thou hast that city fair
Uprooted, and Rama's race destroyed!"[302]

* * * * *

"E'en if Maheshvar comes to save thy life,
Or Vishnu from His Sea, thy doom is fixed
To-day."[303]

* * * * *

"Death comes to every man one day—so why
Dost hesitate?"[304]

Indrajit, thus insulted, retorts:

"* * * * With life restored
Ye forget clean your enemy's death-winged shafts!
Again ye thirst for death and challenge me:
Have you preserved the drug that saves from death?"[305]

Indrajit says that he is not discouraged by the interruption in his sacrifice and asks him not to have any hope of victory over him. He begins his fight at its extreme, blowing his war-conch and twanging his bow-string. Hanuman throws such a giant rock over him that even his father, the Wind-god, feels surprised but Indrajit breaks it to pieces and with a sharp shaft, fells him down senseless. He turns to Lakshmana. Hanuman meanwhile regains consciousness and takes Lakshmana on his shoulders. Now

301. *Ibid.*, (6-26-63).
302. *Ibid.*, (6-26-70).
303. *Ibid.*, (6-26-77).
304. *Ibid.*, (6-26-78).
305. *Ibid.*, (6-26-81).

both look like incarnations of two Durgas—the War goddess. The war between them becomes unparalleled. All weapons are used with similar results on both sides. Indrajit is pierced with arrows, but fighting continues with greater severity. Hanuman gets wounded all over the body and Lakshmana breaks Indrajit's chariot. Now Indrajit resorts to his divine arms but they are destroyed by their counterparts from Lakshmana. Indrajit's Brahmastra is rendered innocuous by one from Lakshmana.[306] Indrajit then uses the Narayanastra (the weapon with the power of Vishnu) and Lakshmana meditates upon Narayana and the weapon circles round him and goes back,[307] and sets Indrajit thinking that Lakshmana may be Narayana Himself![308] Then Indrajit sends the Pasupati Astra (the weapon with the power of Shiva). Vibhishana gets frightened but Lakshmana 'meditating on the Infinite One on whom Shiva himself meditates', nullifies it with his own.[309] Indrajit gets extremely surprised and perturbed. Seeing Vibhishana helping Lakshmana, Indrajit cries out:

> "Thou traitor base that hast thy duty broke,
> And beggar-wise dost cringe before a man,
> Echoing like a drum his every word!"[310]

Lake a true warrior he says that, though he and his forces may be defeated, they shall never forsake honour and prestige for achieving selfish motives, and asks:

> "* * * Thou mayest rule, when we
> Are dead, over Brahma's race, by gods adored,
> Thyself a slave to man! What carest thou
> For glory? Ends it not with us? Ah no!
> Is not thy glory great? For hast thou not
> Our secrets to the foes betrayed who maimed
> Thy sister? Helpest not the men to kill
> Thy brother and me and all the Rakhas race?"[311]
> * * * * *
> "I thirst

306. *Ibid.*, (6-26-139).
307. *Ibid.*, (6-26-148).
308. *Ibid.*, (6-26-150).
309. *Ibid.*, (6-26-159) See (6-27-51) and 'Kamba Ramayanam — A Study' V. V. S. Aiyar, p. 155.
310. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (6-26-164).
311. *Ibid.*, (6-26-168, 169).

To know thy mind, my noble uncle brave! "[312]

Vibhishana justifies his action as righteous, in having left a brother who had abducted the lady from her husband and refused to return her. He says with a contented heart:

"I know that sin can never overcome
Virtue; I've taken refuge in Shri Ram
The God of Gods; let glory come to me
Or Shame; let evil come to me or good
I am content."[313]

Indrajit gets into rage and says:

"Alas! Thy dreams of glory and of good,
O uncle, will dissolve, the moment dire
My barbed arrows pierce thy traitorous breast."[314]

He sends a dreadful shaft at his own uncle, but it is destroyed on its way by one from Lakshmana. Same is the fate of a lance shot by Indrajit. Vibhishana sends his mace on Indrajit whose chariot with the horses falls to the ground.[315] Indrajit answers him with a shower of arrows and disappears in the sky and goes to Ravana who sees in his face signs of despair and reads the failure of his sacrifice. To his question Indrajit replies:

"Thy brother has betrayed my secrets, Sire,
To the foe who has my sacrifices spoiled,
And broke the force of all my darts divine—
If weapon blessed of Him who made the heavens
And earth doth bow to him and turn aside —
Harmless, what can our other arms effect
Our race has sinned, or such a stable foe?
Arises not for us. If Lakshmana frowns,
I fear he can the three worlds blow to dust."[316]

Indrajit 'whose arms had to their centre shook the worlds' is forced to say that the foes 'stand resolved to finish all their race" and advises his father:

"* * * * If thou
Will conquer thy desire for Rama's spouse

312. *Ibid.*, (6-26-170).
313. *Ibid.*, (6-26-177).
314. *Ibid.*, (6-26-178).
315. *Ibid.*, (6-26-181).
316. *Ibid.*, (6-27-3, 4).

And her release, they will forgive our sins,
And go from hence!"[317]

Ravana's heart begins boiling with pride, contempt and anger. 'With his reason-submerging passion for Sita', he laughs and tells his Indrajit:

"* * * * I ween thou art,
My son, now unfit grown for war; I see
Confusion in thy mind."[318]

Ravana wants Indrajit not to fear or worry himself, for he himself proposes to go to the war-front with only bow in hand and none to guard him, and adds that he will surely bring victory. About himself he says with Himalayan courage and confidence:

"* * * Think not I counted on
The Rakshasas who are already fallen:
Think not that I did count on those who're yet
Alive: think not I hoped that thou wouldst beat
My foes upon the field: in my sole right arm
I placed my trust, and I provoked this war!"[319]

Ravana only prefers death at the hands of Rama to renouncing Sita, and says:

"E'en if I lose, if Rama's name will stand,
My name, will not it also last as long
As Vedas are sung on earth? We live today,
To-morrow finds us not: but glory, doth
It ever die?"[320]

He asks Indrajit to go home and sleep peacefully and tells his attendant heralds thundering, "Order forth my battle Car". Indrajit feels ashamed and falls at the feet of his father and says:

"Pardon, my liege, the boldness of my words:
At least when I am gone, may thine eyes see
The good."[321]

317. *Ibid.*, (6-27-6).
318. *Ibid.*, (6-27-7).
319. *Ibid.*, (6-27-8).
320. *Ibid.*, (6-27-10).
321. *Ibid.*, (6-27-13).

He returns to the field with all his celestial weapons looking back at his father at each and every step. The demons express profound fear and Indrajit this time goes alone in his chariot 'which had ranged the heavens and earth, and brought victory after victory to the Rakshasa arms'. Indrajit in his chariot and Lakshmana on Hanuman face each other after the demons and monkeys go away frightened. Arrows like shower of iron fly from both sides. Hanuman is pierced from head to foot. Indrajit sends a dreadful lance on Lakshmana, but it is cut in the middle by an arrow of Lakshmana, and with another the charioteer is thrown down. Now Indrajit himself drives and fights to the surprise of even gods and Lakshmana too. After a little fight the chariot is also broken by Lakshmana. Indrajit now rises up in the sky standing over the central plate of the chariot and gets out of sight. From the heaven, he begins raining hailstones by the power of his earlier penances, but Lakshmana now sends his shafts so as to cover the whole sky with fiery arrows, and Indrajit becomes visible. Lakshmana with a fierce shaft cuts down his left hand.[322] It falls down killing a great number of monkeys. Indrajit now thinks of attacking with the lance of Shiva and once for all finish Lakshmana. But just at the moment Lakshmana sends a shaft with all his might, saying:

> " If Ram is none but He incarnate, whom
> The Vedas sing and Brahmans worship low,
> Then speed, my faithful dart, and hale the head
> Of yonder Indrajit!"[323]

This dart 'shames the chakra of Vishnu, the thunderbolt of Indra and the deadly trident of the Fire-eyed God', and attacks the neck of Indrajit and goes far away with his head. At first his body falls on the ground and then falls the head. The gods feel immensely pleased and get assured of the death of Ravana too. Rama sees Lakshmana coming on Hanuman's shoulders with Angada carrying[324] Indrajit's head. Lakshmana falls at Rama's feet. Rama praises Lakshmana passing his hands on his injuries and thereby curing them. Spies inform Ravana of Indrajit's death and they are immediately assasinated by Ravana and he himself falls on the ground with watering eyes and terrible anger.

322. *Ibid.*, (6-27-43).
323. *Ibid.*, (6-27-51).
324. *Ibid.*, (6-27-60).

His agony is terrible. His lament is very touching. He searches for his son's body but only finds his hand and puts it on his own head, chest, neck and eyes and smells it. Then Ravana finds out the body. He falls on it and laments bitterly. Now his grief gives place to rage. Gods are frightened. He feels miserable at not finding his son's head and goes back to the city with the body. Mandodari cries bitterly and falls on the body. She also expresses her fear that if Ravana still persists he may also get the same fate.[325] Now Ravana goes to Ashoka garden to cut Sita, but Mahodara stops him stating that killing a woman is a great sin and that Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva may laugh at him.[326] He goes back to keep the body of Indrajit in oil.

Tulasi: After Malyavan leaving the council hall, Indrajit says that all will see his play shortly in the battle-field. War commences again. Both armies use their strength and talents. Indrajit drives away all the monkeys by his fierce shafts. Now Hanuman throws a very big mountain on him and kills the driver and horses of his chariot. Indrajit takes care to avoid him knowing his prowess. Indrajit goes to Rama and uses abusive words. Rama destroys all his weapons with ease. Seeing his strength Indrajit decides to have recourse to magic and rains fire and showers filth, puss, blood, hair, bones and stones. Then he spreads dust creating darkness.[327] Monkeys get terrified but Rama dispells all their fear by one arrow. Now Lakshmana starts with Angada and others taking Rama's permission. Indrajit and Lakshmana fight. Lakshmana breaks his chariot and kills his driver. Indrajit finds it impossible to fight in the normal way with Lakshmana. He sends his 'Shakti' which is certain to kill enemies. Lakshmana falls unconscious.[328] Indrajit and a hundred crores of demons with equal strength try to carry him but find it impossible, for he is 'Sesha' himself who supports the earth. Hanuman carries him with ease to Rama.[329] Rama feels greatly pained. Jambavan suggests bringing the physician Sushena of Lanka. Hanuman goes assuming a tiny form and brings his house itself while he is asleep.[330] Sushena bows at Rama's feet and gives information

325. *Ibid.*, (6-28-53).
326. *Ibid.*, (6-28-58).
327. Ram Charit Manas (6-73-2).
328. *Ibid.*, (6-75-4).
329. *Ibid.*, (6-76-3).
330. *Ibid.*, (6-76-4).

about the Himalayan herbs and their whereabouts. Hanuman immediately goes flying to bring the herbs. Meanwhile Ravana gets information, goes to Kalanemi and in spite of his benevolent advice to worship the feet of Rama, asks him in rage to foil Hanuman in his attempt, on pain of death. Kalanemi, realising death at the hands of Hanuman to be better, creates a beautiful garden on Hanuman's way with a lake, house, etc., and himself sits therein disguised as a sage. Hanuman bows to him and the false sage begins singing Rama's glory.[331] He tells Hanuman that in the war Rama is sure to win, and asks him to have a bath in the lake and get initiation for attaining spiritual wisdom. As soon as Hanuman gets into the lake, a big crocodile catches hold of his leg, and there is a fight between them. Hanuman kills it and it gets transformed into a celestial damsel and goes to heaven,[332] relieved of a curse. She tells him that the sage is a demon. Hanuman kills the demon and he dies repeating Rama's name. Hanuman proceeds further happily.[333] He is not able to locate the herbs, uproots the very mountain and flies back at night. While passing over Ayodhya, Bharata takes him to be a demon and shoots a fierce shaft at him.[334] Hanuman falls down unconscious repeating Rama's name. Bharata hearing the dear name, runs up to him anxiously and embraces Hanuman who does not wake up. Bharata says that he should wake up, if his love for Rama is pure, and Hanuman gets up without any pain in the body saying 'Victory to the king of Koshala.'[335] Hearing all that has happened, Bharata feels much for his inability to be of any use to Rama.[336] He then asks Hanuman to start immediately lest day should break, and suggests that he with the mountain may go straight to Rama in no time on the head of a shaft of his.[337] Hanuman is not sure of this and says that he will himself fly back in time by the grace of Rama, and leaves for Lanka.

Rama was lamenting:

> "Brother, never could you bear to see me suffering; you were always tender-hearted; For my sake, you

331. *Ibid.*, (6-78-2).
332. *Ibid.*, (6-78).
333. *Ibid.*, (6-79-3).
334. *Ibid.*, (6-79).
335. *Ibid.*, (6-80-4).
336. *Ibid.*, (6-81-2).
337. *Ibid.*, (6-81-3).

left father and mother and bore the hardships of the forest, cold and heat and wind. Brother where is now the love you bore me? Will you not rise at the sound of my mourning? Had I known that I should lose my brother in the forest, I should not have heeded my fahter's behest. Sons and riches, wives, houses and families come and go in the world continually; not so a true brother. Think on this, dear Lakshmana, and awake." * * * *

"How can I face return to Avadh, having lost a dear brother for a woman's sake? The shame her loss before the world I might have borne; to lose a wife is no great loss. But now my hard and pitiless heart will have to bear both that disgrace and grief for you."[339]

The monkeys are also downcast. Hanuman comes like 'an heroic theme in the midst of a dirge'.[340] Rama greets Hanuman, Sushena immediately applies the medicinal herbs and Lakshmana gets up with perfect health,[341] and Rama embraces Lakshmana. All the monkeys jump with mirth. Hanuman carries back Sushena with his house, puts him in his original place and returns.

* * * * *

Tulasidas describes the fight and death of Kumbhakarna and then follows Indrajit's sacrifice.

* * * * *

Indrajit tells his father that, with the help of new strength and chariot vouch-safed by the patron deity, he is sure to have success.[342] The battle begins again with great intensity. Indrajit gets into his mysterious chariot and fights from land and sky. The whole atmosphere gets filled with arrows from both sides. Monkeys rain mountains and trees over the demons. Indrajit's magic puzzles and beweilders the monkeys. Indrajit hits down all including

338. *Ibid.*, (6-83-2 to 4).
339. *Ibid.*, (6-83-6, 7).
340. *Ibid.*, (6-83).
341. *Ibid.*, (6-84-1).
342. *Ibid.*, (6-94-3, 4).

Lakshmana, Sugriva and Vibhishana and then begins a direct fight with Rama. Indrajit sends 'Naga-pasha' arrow which becomes serpents and ties down Rama. The poet says:

> "He who is ever independent, One, the Blessed Lord,
> exhibits like a showman all sorts of illusory feats.
> It was to enhance the glory of the battle that the lord
> let himself be bound by the serpents' coil; but the gods
> were frightened."[343]

Indrajit throws a glittering trident at Jambavan, but it is caught hold of by him. He throws the same weapon on Indrajit who falls fainted. Jambavan again beats him on the floor taking him by his legs and throws him into Lanka.[344] Narada sends Garuda to Rama and he eats away all the serpents and dispells the illusion of Indrajit's magic[345] from the monkeys who fight again with redoubled vigour driving away the demons. Indrajit gets back his consciousness and feels ashamed to see his father. He goes in no time into a mountain cave to perform a sacrifice to attain immortality.[346] Vibhishana, understanding the step taken by Indrajit, tells Rama about the extraodrinary strength of the sacrifice and suggests that it should be immediately destroyed. Rama asks Lakshmana to go with Angada, Jambavan, Sugriva, Vibhishana, etc., and foil the attempt of Indrajit. Rama advises Lakshmana to be very careful. Lakshmana starts well-equipped, saying:

> "Though a hundred Shivas should come to his aid,
> yet will I kill him in the name of Rama!"[347]

They reach the place and witness an unusual sacrifice with blood and buffalo meat. They spoil the whole sacrifice but find Indrajit still continuing his sacrifice.[348] They praise him, but catch his hair and drive him away from the place by kicks. Indrajit now takes his trident and all run away to Lakshmana. Indrajit comes to him roaring and with the trident lays Angada and Hanuman

343. *Ibid.*, (6-95-6, 7).
344. *Ibid.*, (6-96-5).
345. *Ibid.*, (6-96).
346. *Ibid.*, (6-98-1).
347. *Ibid.*, (6-98-7).
348. *Ibid.*, (6-99-1).

low. and sends the dreadful trident on Lakshmana, but it is broken by a shaft of Lakshmana. Indrajit becomes invisible and fights assuming various forms. Finding this, Lakshmana meditates upon Rama and sends a shaft accurately on him. This shaft gets into his chest and he falls dead, devoid of all deception,[349] crying, " Where is Lakshmana, where is Rama ". Angada and Hanuman pay tribute to the mother of such a son. Hanuman takes his body and places it at Lanka's gate. Ravana falls fainted. Mandodari bitterly weeps. All of Lanka begin cursing Ravana and are very sorry for the loss of their brave prince. Ravana advises all ladies to think of the ephemeral nature of the world and get contented, for : "Many are skilled in giving good advice but few are those who follow it themseves."[350]

In Valmiki, the trend is generally as in Kambar. After the death of Atikaya, Indrajit comes after a fire-sacrifice. Being invisible he employs magic. He hits down all unconscious, including Rama and Lakshmana.[351] On the advice of Jambavan, Hanuman brings the mountain of herbs from Himalayas, and the very smell of the herbs bring back Rama, Lakshmana and others to consciousness. The mountain is taken back to its original place.[352] Battle continues. Lanka is burnt on the suggestion of Sugriva. The main tower of Lanka is broken by Rama. Nikumbha, Kumbha, the sons of Kumbhakarna and several others die in the battle, including Makaraksha, the son of Khara, and Kampana. Indrajit again appears. Rama stops Lakshmana from using Brahmastra as being opposed to the ethical code of war-fare. Indrajit brings a false Sita and cuts her into two before Hanuman and other monkeys.[353] He thereafter goes to Nikumbhila to perform a special sacrifice. Hanuman comes with the sad news and Rama falls unconscious. Lakshmana vehemently criticises righteousness and its consequences, and says that their very leaving Ayodhya was wrong.[354] He wants that for the extreme attrocities of the demons, Lanka should at least be razed to the ground. Vibhishana now sees Rama lying on the lap of Lakshmana. He expresses the trick

349. *Ibid.*, (6-99-8).
350. *Ibid.*, (6-101-2).
351. Valmiki Ramayana (6-73).
352. *Ibid.*, (6-74).
353. *Ibid.*, (6-81).
354. *Ibid.*, (6-83).

played by Indrajit and says that vigorous sacrifice is going on in Nikumbhila. After Rama regains consciousness, he sends Lakshmana with Vibhishana, and there is a war of words between Indrajit and Vibhishana, each maintaining that his own stand is right and that that of the other is wrong, and denouncing the other.[355] The sacrifice is destroyed and the fight is resumed, and Indrajit uses all his weapons but at the end he is killed by Lakshmana with a shaft sent after meditating on Rama.[356] Ravana weeps bitterly and Rama is overjoyed. Ravana goes to Ashoka garden to assasinate Sita but one Suparshva stops him from his ill-advised action pointing at its gross impropriety, stating that his fame and good name will all be lost, and that he should win Rama in fight and get Sita.[357]

In Adhyatma Ramayana the scene is comparatively short. Indrajit comes after the death of Atikaya. Ravana asks him to guard Lanka, and himself goes to face Rama. Seeing Vibhishana, he sends the great Shakti got from Giant Mai[358] but Lakshmana receives it on himself and consequently falls unconscious.[359]. Ravana tries to carry him off but in vain.[360] Hanuman delivers a fist blow on Ravana's chest felling him down and carries Lakshmana back to Rama. The Shakti returns to Ravana as Lakshmana is a part-incarnation of Narayana Himself.[361] Now there is a severe fight between Rama and Ravana. Rama cuts Ravana's flag and destroys his chariot and the horses with the charioteer together with all his weapons and he faints on a shaft from Rama. With another shaft Rama cuts off the crown of Ravana and asks him to go back to Lanka and return the next day after rest to show his valour.[362] Finding Lakshmana fallen unconscious, Rama pretends to be sorrow-stricken and asks Hanuman to bring the Drona mountain of herbs and get back the life of Lakshmana and the monkeys. Hanuman leaves. Ravana forces Kalanemi to create obstacles in the way of Hanuman over-ruling the good advice of Kalanemi suggesting to Ravana to return Sita to Rama and giving

355. *Ibid.*, (6-87).
356. *Ibid.*, (6-91).
357. *Ibid.*, (6-93).
358. Adhyatma Ramayana (6-6-5).
359. *Ibid.*, (6-6-10).
360. *Ibid.*, (6-6-11).
361. *Ibid.*, (6-6-17).
362. *Ibid.*, (6-6-2390),

the kingdom of Lanka to Vibhishana and to go for penance[363] and worship Rama. Kalanemi, assuming the form of a sage, creates a garden and a lake on Hanuman's route. Hanuman gets into the lake and kills the crocodile therein which becomes a celestial damsel Dhanyamalai.[364] He kills Kalanemi too who resumes his original demon form.[365] Hanuman goes ahead and brings the Drona mountain of herbs. With these Sushena treats Lakshmana and he gets up as if from sleep asking, " Where is Ravana? Be there, be there. Look, I finish you now!"[366] There Ravana remembers the words of Brahma and Anaranya. * * * * Now comes the fight of Kumbhakarna ending in his death whereafter comes the final scene of Indrajit. * * * * Indrajit finding his uncle dead and father dejected, tells Ravana to be cheerful, and goes to perform the sacrifice at the temple of Nikumbhila. Vibhishana informs Rama about it and requests him to send Lakshmana with him but Rama offers himself. Now Vibhishana says that only he who has had a fast for twelve years without even a wink of sleep can kill him, according to the boon of Brahma,[367] and adds that Lakshmana is one such and that he alone can kill him. Then Lakshmana goes with Hanuman, Vibhishana, Jambavan and monkeys. The sacrifice is disturbed and after a wordy fight between Vibhishana and Indrajit, a severe fight rages forth for three days and three nights.[368] The head of Indrajit is cut off to fall on the ground.[369] Ravana falls fainted and getting up, bitterly weeps. Then he runs to kill Sita[370] but is stopped by demon Suparshava pointing at the sinful nature of killing a woman and saying that he should kill Rama and Lakshmana in battle and get Sita.[371]

In this scene the features common to the several works are the death of Indrajit by Lakshmana after the fight at the temple of Nikumbhila on the advice of Vibhishana. There are differences

363. *Ibid.*, (6-6-46).
364. *Ibid.*, (6-7-24).
365. *Ibid.*, (6-7-33).
366. *Ibid.*, (6-7-38).
367. *Ibid.*, (6-7-64, 65).
368. *Ibid.*, (6-9-57).
369. *Ibid.*, (6-9-47).
370. *Ibid.*, (6-9-63).
371. *Ibid.*, (6-9-65 to 69).

in the development of the story and incidents. On a comparative study the following are found to be the salient features:

(a) Though the death of Indrajit occurs in all the four works after the death of Kumbhakarna, the initial fight of Indrajit with Lakshmana and the latter falling unconscious and Hanuman's bringing the mountain of medicinal herbs from the Himalayas is related in Kambar after the death of Kumbhakarna, Atikaya, etc. following Valmiki, but in Tulasi, it is just before the fight of Kumbhakarna. In Adhyatma alone this initial fight and Lakshmana's falling unconsciousness is due to the Shakti sent by Ravana and not due to any action of Indrajit, and is placed before the fight of Kumbhakarna and after the death of Atikaya etc.

(b) In Kambar, Indrajit ties down Lakshmana and the monkeys by his Nagastra (the serpent dart) seeing which Rama weeps bitterly and then gets furious but Garuda saves the situation by breaking off the Nagapasha. His Brahmastra comes later and affects Lakshmana and monkeys. In Tulasi it is the dreadful 'Shakti' which is thrown by Indrajit that renders Lakshmana unconscious and Hanuman revives him by bringing the mountain of herbs from the Himalayas. Later, after the death of Kumbhakarna, Indrajit sends the Nagapasha on Rama alone and Garuda on the words of Narada liberates Rama. In Valmiki, Indrajit leaves the Brahmastra on Rama and Lakshmana only, and Hanuman cures them by bringing the mountain of herbs from the Himalayas. The Nagastra is used by him earlier on Rama and Lakshmana, and Garuda revives them. In Adhyatma Ramayana, it is the Shakti sent by Ravana which renders Lakshmana unconscious and he is revived with the help of the mountain of herbs brought by Hanuman. There is no mention of any Nagastra in the Adhyatma Ramayana.

(c) In Kambar, subsequent to the Nagastra, Indrajit attacks Lakshmana and the monkeys with the Brahmastra and all fall unconscious drowning Rama in the ocean of distress, when the gods encourage him. All are saved by the mountain of herbs brought by Hanuman. In the other three epics, no subsequent attack with any Brahmastra or Nagastra or Shakti is related. In Valmiki, it is the Brahmastra only here and the Nagastra was earlier in the first day's fight.

(d) In Kambar, Sita is brought over the battle-field and shown Rama and Lakshmana fallen as dead. In Tulasi, this incident is not described. Kambar has followed the Post-Nagastra incident of Valmiki, and Tulasi follows Adhyatma.

(e) Only in Kambar, Shiva shows Hanuman to Uma on the Himalayas. Hanuman also shows his reverences to all the gods there.

(f) Only in Kambar, Rama blesses Hanuman with immortality.

(g) The incident of Indrajit killing the Maya Sita (False Sita) before Hanuman, and Rama's deep lament, Lakshmana's anger and Vibhishana's consolation are portrayed in Kambar following Valmiki, but not in Tulasi and Adhyatma.

(h) Only in Tulasi, Ravana does not go to assasinate Sita immediately after hearing the sad news of the death of Indrajit.

(i) The Kalanemi incidents to create obstacles on the way of Hanuman is related by Tulasidas following Adhyatma Ramayana; Kambar and Valmiki do not mention this.

(j) Only in Tulasi, Hanuman is brought down by Bharata's arrow on his way back from the Himalayas with the mountain of herbs.

(k) Only in Tulasi, Sushena, the local physican of Lanka, is brought with the house by Hanuman. Sushena suggests the mountain herb and treats Lakshmana. Hanuman takes the mountain back to its original place, and the house with Sushena in it to its place. (Here it may be interesting to recall that in Kambar, Ravana had brought Sita with the cottage and the surrounding land of Panchavati to Lanka in Aranya Kanda.)

(l) In Kambar, following Valmiki, Lanka is burnt again on the suggestion of Sugriva. Tulasi and Adhyatma do not say so.

(m) Only in Adhyatma Ramayana there is no direct fight between Indrajit and Rama or Lakshmana before Nikumbhila sacrifice. It is Ravana who fells Lakshmana with Mai's Shakti. This incident of Ravana hitting Lakshmana with the Shakti, comes in Valmiki after the death of Indrajit.

(n) In Kambar the very wind coming through the herbs of the mountain brought by Hanuman revives Lakshmana and others but in Tulasi, Valmiki and Adhyatma, Sushena applies the herbs to Lakshmana and only then he regains his consciousness.

11. *Reserve Forces of Ravana and their End*:

Kambar: Ravana sends for all his reserve forces throughout the universe. They assemble in Lanka, every one among them possessing extraordinary prowess. Demon King Vanni of Pushkara Island enquires about the strength of the two men. Malyavan gives an account of the strength of Rama, Lakshmana and the monkeys and advises that compromise will be best at this juncture, but Vanni is against it.[372] He assures Ravana of success and starts to the field. Ravana also marches on. The monkeys tremble to see such a big demon-force coming and so also the gods who report to Shiva[373] who assures them that Rama will ultimately kill all the demons and achieve victory. Now the monkey leaders, other than Hanuman, Sugriva and Angada, begin to flee from the battle field. Even Jambavan gets frightened. Angada encourages him. On the words of Jambavan, the monkey leaders return. Rama says that he will himself destroy the whole army.[374] Asking Lakshmana to guide and guard the monkey army and Hanuman, Vibhishana and Sugriva to help him, Rama begins his war with the demons. Certain bad omens occur to the demons. Crores of demons die on the spot. Huge armies one after another come and face Rama and in his shower of arrows all are exterminated. Now gods approach Shiva to know the end of this fight and Shiva assures them of Rama's success.[375] The Gandharvastra of Rama destroys the ten crores of demon chieftains and the entire reserve force of Ravana.[376] Even Shiva and Indra find it impossible to count the number of arrows coming out of the bow of Rama.[377] The demons use their celestial weapons and Rama meets them successfully and destroys them together with the demons. With their death the Mother Earth also feels the burden lightened.[378] Gods also feel a little relief and pay tributes to Rama.

Tulasi: Ravana calls for his best warriors and tells them that he waged the war on the strength of his own arm and shall

372. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (6-29-50).
373. *Ibid.*, (6-30-24, 25).
374. *Ibid.*, (6-30-59).
375. *Ibid.*, (6-30-154).
376. *Ibid.*, (6-30-184).
377. *Ibid.*, (6-30-220, 221).
378. *Ibid.*, (6-30-227).

answer the enemy adequately.[379] So saying he blows the military trumpet and assembles all the demon warriors with extraordinary strength. At that time appear certain bad omens, but Ravana cares not relying on his own might.[380] The huge army marches on. Ravana cries out to them to kill all the monkeys and bears and that he himself will kill the two brothers.[381] Both armies shout victory to themselves. When Vibhishana finds Rama with no chariot and bare feet, he expresses his fear. Rama tells him that the chariot which will wield victory is something totally different. Explaining the form of the chariot necessary for victory, Rama states:

> " Heroism, and courage are the wheels of that chariot; truth and virtuous conduct its firm-set flags and pennants; strength, discretion, self-control and unselfish action are its horses, harnessed with compassion, kindness and impartial judgment. The worship of God is its skillful charioteer, detachment his shield and contentment his scimitar; alms giving is his axe and understanding his keen lance and the highest wisdom his unyielding bow. His quiver is a soul stainless and unmoved, filled with the arrows of restraint, control and pious observance. Worship of Brahmans and the guru is his impenetrable buckler. "[382]

The fight continues. Brahma, Shiva and Uma witness. The monkeys appear like Deaths personified. Rama's army of bears and monkeys fights so vigorously that the army of demons wavers.

In Valmiki, Ravana asks all his men to enter into war with adequate weapons and kill Rama. All form a huge army and fight but are finally killed by Rama.[383] Then Ravana also marches and fights, and great warriors like Viroopaksha, Mahodara and Mahaparshva are killed.

379. Ram Charit Manas (6-101-3).
380. *Ibid.*, (6-101-5).
381. *Ibid.*, (6-102-6).
382. *Ibid.*, (6-103-3 to 5).
383. Valmiki Ramayana (6-95).

In Adhyatma Ramayana this scene occupies only two stanzas saying that Ravana entered war with the remaining demon warriors, and Rama killed all those warriors.[384]

On a comparative study the following are the salient features:

(a) Only Kambar mentions that Ravana has his demon armies throughout the Universe and gets them assembled for the war.

(b) Only in Tulasi, Vibhishana feels the absence of a chariot for Rama who describes what a chariot should be which really helps to achieve victory.

(c) Kambar has devoted 235 stanzas 'with his usual power and verse', Valmiki is somewhat detailed, but Tulasi and Adhyatma are very short.

12. *Lakshmana and Ravana*:

Kambar: Though the reserve demon forces brought from all over the universe are destroyed by Rama single-handed, there still remains his huge extraordinary strong guard of thousand army units. Ravana now comes well armed. Hanuman and Lakshmana destroy a good lot of the demons. Lakshmana gets over Hanuman encouraging the frightened monkeys and faces Ravana.[385] Ravana sends on him the 'Mohanastra' which can even destroy the power of Shiva[286], but Lakshmana nullifies its effect by his 'Vishnuastra' on the advice of Vibhishana.[387] Ravana finding Vibhishana advising, gets angry and sends his Shakti given by his father-in-law Mai on Vibhishana with such a force as to excel Brahmastra, Vajrayudha and even the Chakrayudha of Vishnu.[388] Vibhishana tells Lakshmana that the hit of that weapon will certainly kill him. Lakshmana receives it on himself as 'his arrows find it impossible to destroy it '.[389] Vibhishana now kills with his weapon of 'gada'

384. Adhyatma Ramayana (6-10-1, 2).
385. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (6-31-18).
386. *Ibid.*, (6-31-23).
387. *Ibid.*, (6-31-24).
388. *Ibid.*, (6-31-26, 27).
389. *Ibid.*, (6-31-32).

the horses of the chariots of Ravana and the charioteer. Ravana suddenly gets over into the sky and sends fire darts on Vibhishana, a thousand shafts on Hanuman and returns to Lanka thinking that his work is over.[390] Vibhishana now finds the sad state of Lakshmana and decides to finish off his life with Lakshmana, but Jambavan stops him. On the suggestion of Jambavan, Hanuman brings the mountain of herbs once again from the Himalayas in no time and Lakshmana gets back his consciousness, when its wind blows on him.[391] All go to Rama, and on Rama's enquiry Jambavan tells what had happened, and Rama pays tributes to Hanuman, and also Lakshmana for his ready sacrifice.

Tulasi: Ravana finds his forces retreating and goes forward. The usual fight again commences with greater vigour. Ravana terrifies the monkeys and they cry for rescue. Lakshmana breaks the crores of dreadful weapons of Ravana in no time. Ravana also becomes unconscious after his charioteer is killed and the chariot destroyed. Later he sends the Shakti got from Brahma on Lakshmana, which strikes on his chest.[392] Lakshmana falls down unconscious. Ravana tries to carry him away, but finds it impossible.[393]. Hanuman cariers him to Rama after an exchange of fist with Ravana. Rama tells him:

> "My brother, remember that you are the devourer of Death and the saviour of the Gods!"[394]

On these words, Lakshmana immediately gets up, and the dreadful Shakti flies into the sky. Lakshmana immediately goes and faces the foe and breaks the chariot and kills the charioteer. Ravana also faints and another carioteer takes him back to Lanka.

In Valmiki, this scene begins with an attack by Ravana. The fight goes on very vigorously. Vibhishana slays the horses of Ravana, seeing which Ravana sends on him the Shakti got from Mai, but Lakshmana receiving the same on his chest falls unconscious. Rama is infuriated and, crying that the end of war is come,

390. *Ibid.*, (6-31-34).
391. *Ibid.*, (6-31-42).
392. Ram Charit Manas (6-108-4).
393. *Ibid.*, (6-108-Chand).
394. *Ibid.*, (6-109-3).

sends his shafts in such a number that Ravana runs off ignominiously.[395] Rama laments bitterly seeing the state of Lakshmana and gets disappointed feeling the brother to be dearer to him than even Sita or the kingdom, for such can be had anywhere. Sushena, the monkey doctor assures Rama about the life of Lakshmana and asks Hanuman to bring the mountain of Sanjeevini and other medicinal herbs from the Himalayas. Hanuman brings the mountain itself in no time. The application of the herbs revives Lakshmana to the immense pleasure of Rama and all others. Rama embracing Lakshmana dispels his defeatist idea and weakness, and expresses his desire to hear of the end of the enemies that very day before the sunset.[396]

This scene is not found here in Adhyatma Ramayana. It is however given earlier with the Kalanemi incident.[397]

On a comparative study, the following features appear to be noteworthy:

(a) In Kambar, the Shakti is used by Ravana intending to strike Vibhishana on seeing him advising Lakshmana, and Lakshmana receives it on himself. In Tulasi, Vibhishana does not appear. He has followed Adhyatma whereas Kambar has followed Valmiki. Kambar takes advantage of this scene to depict the character of Vibhishana's sacrifice and valour.

(b) In Tulasi and Valmiki too, Ravana tries in vain to carry away Lakshmana and falls flat on the ground, and Hanuman carries him to Rama. There is a similar incident in Kambar.[398]

(c) In Kambar as in Valmiki, this Shakti weapon is got from Mai demon, the father-in-law of Ravana, as a wedding present. In Tulasi, the Shakthi is given by Brahma and not by Mai as in Kambar.

(d) In Kambar, cure of Lakshmana is by the wind from the mountain of herbs brought by Hanuman on the words of Jamba-

395. Valmiki Ramayana (6-101).
396. *Ibid.*, (6-102).
397. Adhyatma Ramayana (6-6).
398. Kamba Ramayanam (6-14-205 to 212).

van. In Tulasi, mere words of Rama bring Lakshmana back to consciousness. No mountain of herbs is brought as in Kambar.

(e) In Tulasi, Ravana does not return as in Kambar after shooting at Vibhishana and Hanuman. Lakshmana after regaining consciousness goes back to the field and breaks Ravana's chariot and kills the charioteer, and Ravana is taken to Lanka in another chariot. In Valmiki, Rama gets extremely infuriated and sends unprecedented shafts on Ravana in such a large number that Ravana runs away ignominiously to Lanka. Adhyatma Ramayana is silent here.

13. *Ravana's End* :

Kambar: The monkey army with Vibhishana sees the corpses of the demons and are astonished at Rama's prowess in having killed so great a number, single handed.[399] Ravana is shocked to hear of the annihilation of the entire reserve force and the survival of Lakshmana, Vibhishana and Hanuman, for he was under the impression of having achieved success, and arranged to give a grand feast to all the warriors after an oil bath at the hands of angels. He sees many bad omens and hears the wailing of demonesses.[400] He views the corpses of crores of demons in the battle field from a tower and orders Mahodara to assemble the remaining forces, and himself gets ready for war with all arms and weapons and asks for his chariot which can march equally over the land, sea and the sky, cross the fire and reach even the abode of Brahma, and it comes with all war decorations and equipments. Ravana worships the chariot and performs many acts of charity. Then he gets into the chariot swearing :

"Or Janaki shall beat her breasts to-day
And mourn her Ram with dishevelled hair, or poor
Mandodari shall fall upon my corpse
And rend her breast in unconsolable grief!
So fierce shall be my fight if Rama cross
My path to-day!"[401]

399. *Ibid.*, (6-32).
400. *Ibid.*, (6-33).
401. *Ibid.*, (6-34-26).

Ravana thereafter "smacks his arrows in the manner of wrestlers, and at the thundering sound the vault of the sky cloves into two, the mountains split, the earth feels as if a wound is opened in her side, and even the Sun flees from his golden car."[402]

Ravana twangs his bow, and its sound bursts hills into pieces hearing which even the goddesses and demonesses fear the death of their husbands.[403] Rama also gets ready. Shiva asks the gods to send a chariot for Rama. The chariot of Indra with Matali the charioteer, is sent in all heavenly majesty. Rama is pleased with the chariot. He however suspects that it may be one created by magic of the demons. The horses begin reciting the Vedas.[404] Then with the approval of Hanuman and Lakshmana, Rama ascends the chariot determined to kill Ravana and end the grief of Sita and gods. Mahodara goes to attack Lakshmana, but on the way he is killed by Rama.[405] Ravana approaches Rama, and a straight fight commences. It appears as a fight between 'wisdom and evil deeds, or knowledge and ignorance or righteousness and sin!'[406] Ravana blows his conch terrifying gods, and Vishnu's celestial conch also sounds automatically without Rama's knowing this. The five weapons of Vishnu themselves come to assist Rama. Horses of both the chariots start at their opposite numbers and the flags dash on each other. Innumerable arrows fly from both sides. "The combined shower", says Kambar:

"Did cover the earth and sky, and hills and seas :
The eyes of even gods could see in all
The world naught but these iron-shafts. Can ev'n
Men of wisdom ever count them? Darkness spread
All o'er the universe and there was fire
Burning all living kind — such was the fight
Of Ravana and Rama. And even Shiva
Wondering, did exclaim, 'Was ever fight
Like this'?"[407]

402. 'Kamba Ramayanam — A Study' — V. V. S. Aiyar, p. 269.
403. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (6-34-29).
404. *Ibid.*, (6-35-24).
405. *Ibid.*, (6-36-15).
406. *Ibid.*, (6-36-24).
407. *Ibid.*, (6-36-50).

Rama nullifies all the arrows of Ravana and his lances and axes. Ravana suddenly rises into the sky and begins his shower of arrows therefrom, and on Rama's direction, Matali takes up his chariot higher than that of Ravana. The wheels of the chariots make such quick revolutions in the air that even gods find it difficult to locate the actual chariot of Rama. The effect of the war is so stupendous that there remains "no hill whose summit is not broken, no direction that escapes from the conflagration set in by the arrows and astras of the combatants, no living being that does not vomit in terror."[408] Even meteors dash against the wheels and fall down broken, when the two chariots move from place to place in the sky and on earth. They travel throughout the universe chasing each other, and approach Lanka both undefeated. Ravana cuts the flags of Indra's chariot and sends a dart into the chest of Matali. Rama enraged, sends countless arrows destroying Ravana's net of arrows which covered Rama from the sight of gods. Now Garuda comes and sits on the flag-staff of Rama. Ravana sends the Tamasa-Astra and it is destroyed by the Shiva-Astra of Rama and so also the Maya-Astra of Ravana by the Gandharva-Astra of Rama. Then Ravana throws the dreadful and unfailing mace, but a single shaft of Rama breaks it into pieces. Ravana by his power of illusion makes all the dead demons appear on the battle-field, including Indrajit, Atikaya, etc. and shouts:

> "Hast thou forsooth defeated us? and dost
> Believe that we could die? Thou'lt see our fight
> This day! Advance, Advance!"[409]

Gods, sages, monkeys and even Rama himself is taken aback. Matali tells him of the illusion created by Ravana, and that the illusion can be destroyed by a single dart thrown after pronouncing the Supreme Name of Himself.[410] Rama does so. Then Ravana throws the triple lance of Shiva. It approaches shaking even righteousness, and hits Rama but the very utterance of 'Hum' by Rama with rage shatters it to pieces. Astonished at this, Ravana wonders whether Rama who is not Shiva, Vishnu or Brahma, may not be the very God of Gods, the Univer-

408. 'Kamba Ramayanam — A Study' V. V. S. Aiyar, p. 272.
409. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (6-36-115).
410. *Ibid.*, (6-36-122).

sal Cause.[411] However, he is determined to kill his foe or be killed. He thinks of the 'Nairriti Astra' and it comes to him. He sends it which goes like several dreadful cobras to attack Rama. Rama in return sends the Garudastra and Nairriti's effect is nullifield. Rama is on the defensive till Ravana 'shows signs of exhaustion', and then begins his attacks. Rama sends one shaft to strike at the chest of Ravana just to floor him down, and then cuts one of his heads with a crescent arrow.[412] The head straight away goes and falls into the sea to the pleasure of the gods but another head grows up again abusing Rama with rage.[413] The head that was cut also appears shouting harsh words. Now Ravana sends fourteen shafts on Rama at a stretch. Rama taking the hits lightly, cuts off a hand of Ravana thinking that his heads have the power to grow again, but another hand also grows. Ravana hits Matali by throwing that fallen hand making him vomit blood and get tired.[414] Ravana again throws the Tomara weapon on Matali, but Rama breaks it. Ravana later throws other weapons on Rama injuring several parts of his body. Ravana is greatly tired and is sunk, when his charioteer drives back. Rama, in spite of Matali's advice, leaves Ravana as a true fighter according to the rules of war. When Ravana is refreshed, he finds Rama constantly standing in the war-front, but his own chariot to have retreated. He feels insulated and rebukes his charioteer severely and approaches him with sword in hand, but he explains that Ravana had sunk due to tiresomeness and that he would have been killed by the arrows of Rama had he stayed, and adds :

> " The charioteer must judge the condition
> Of him who fights from on his car : when sinks
> The hero powerless to continue
> The fight, 'tis the duty of the charioteer
> To save his master's life by wise retreat? "[415],

Ravana gets cooled. He asks him to take the chariot again to the war-front. Rama breaks Ravana's bows one after another.

411. *Ibid.*, (6-36-135).
412. *Ibid.*, (6-36-149).
413. *Ibid.*, (6-36-153).
414. *Ibid.*, (6-36-159).
415. *Ibid.*, (6-36-182).

Ravana goes on fighting 'with the strength of despair' and new fury. Rama now determines to end Ravana and leaves the Brahmastra itself on him. It enters the chest of Ravana and he falls down dead.[416] The Brahmastra returns to Rama. The poet says—

"The holy dart of Raghava did drink
His three crore years of mortal life and all
The strength of his austerities; it quenched
The blessing Brahma had bestowed on him
That non should have the power to conquer him;
It did the might extinguish which had brought
The universe beneath his awful sway;
And piercing clean his chest, it drank the blood
And straightaway flashed through th' air with lightning speed
Rejoicing in the grateful blessings breath'd
By Gods and Brahmans true, and followed close
By the rain of flowers that they did shower all through
Its path, dart pursued its way to th' Sea
Of Milk; it washed therein its bloody stains
And turned, and flying over the waves that played
On the sea of Ravana's blood, it entered quick
And hid itself within the quiver of Ram,
Its eerie home."[417]

Thus comes the end of Ravana. But Ravana's faces continue to appear cheerful. Rama gets his chariot down and sees Ravana. Matali on the words of Rama, takes back the chariot to Indra. Rama says that this victory does not give him any credit for Ravana has received blows at his back and had already been defeated by Kartaveeryarjuna, and moreover, the defeat has been in a fight.[418] Monkeys jump over the ten heads. Vibhishana at the death of his brother comes with tearful eyes. Rama asks him to perform the funeral ceremony of his brother and goes to meet the gods who had come to express their gratitude and praises. Vibhishana falls on the body of Ravana giving vent to deep sorrow.

416. *Ibid.*, (6-36-198).
417. *Ibid.*, (6-36-198, 199).
418. *Ibid.*, (6-36-207 to 209).

Jambavan consoles him.[419] Then Mandodari comes with a few other ladies. They all cry out in extreme grief falling on Ravana's corpse. Mandodari falls on his chest crying out aloud about her being destined to die after her husband. She laments :

"The noble frame that lifted high the hill
Of Shiv is pierced through and through by darts:
There is not even space for a ses'mum seed
To rest o'er all its vast expanse! Did Ram
Desire to sound and see the exact spot
Where did reside my Ravan's mighty spirit?
Or did that hero's conscious darts believe
That love for Janaki might yet remain
Concealed within that handsome frame, and did
They probe for it, o'er every needle-point
Of space therein?"[420]

She exclaims that the beauty of Sita, her chastity, Ravana's passion for her, the severed nose of Shoorpanakha, and the arrival of Rama on the words of Dasharatha, his father, have finally turned to be the reward for the penance of Indra.[421] Continuing she says that she had been under the impression that her husband can never die, but it has happened at the hands of a mere man[422] and that the boon which was like a sea of milk has been curdled by Sita, the sour. She begins to think who that man can be and realises that his death is only due to his abducting the wife of none else but Narayana Himself.[423] She passes her hands over his chest crying at the pitch of her voice and getting exhausted falls on him dead.[424] All praise Mandodari. Vibhishana performs the funeral functions of Ravana and all the dead demons.

Tulasi : Ravana performs a sacrifice to achieve success in war. Vibhishana gets this news and informs Rama who sends Hanuman, Angada, etc. They destroy the sacrifice and return to Rama.[425]

419. *Ibid.*, (6-36-227).
420. *Ibid.*, (6-36-239).
421. *Ibid.*, (6-36-241).
422. *Ibid.*, (6-36-242).
423. *Ibid.*, (6-36-245).
424. *Ibid.*, (6-36-246).
425. Ram Charit Manas (6-110).

Ravana now gets desperate. Both the armies commence their final fight. Numberless demons fall dead receiving the arrows of Rama[426] and a river of blood begins flowing. It becomes a place for festivity for ghosts, goblins and vampires who bathe in the stream of blood. Crows and kites also have a delightful feast. Crores of headless trunks flow in the stream. Ravana finds himself left alone and determines to use his magic.[427] Gods find Rama standing on the ground and Indra immediately sends his chariot through Matali to Rama.[428] Rama feels pleased. Ravana spreads his magic, and it affects all but Rama. The monkeys see among demons very many Ramas and Lakshmanas and get frightened. Rama dispels the illusion with his arrows in a moment.[429] Rama, realising the tiresomeness of the monkeys asks them to see his duel with Ravana and advances.

Ravana shouts:

> "Hearken, ascetic! I am not such as those warriors whom you have vanquished on the field! * * * Today I shall assuredly consign you to your doom! It is unyielding Ravana with whom you have to deal."[430]

Rama smiles and says that he should 'cease to brag and prove his courage by his acts'. Rama adds that 'there are in the world three kinds of men; one like the trumpet-flower, bears only blossom; the second like the mango, bears both flower and fruit; a third like the bread fruit tree, only fruit. One talks, the second talks and acts, the third only acts without talking.'[431] Ravana sends his sharp lance, but it is broken by Rama. His attacks are all nullified by Rama in no time. Ravana now sends a hundred arrows on Matali who falls on the ground crying 'Victory to Ram' and Rama the merciful lifts him up.[432] Rama gets furious and twangs his bow, the sound of which frightens all including Mandodari. He sends dreadful shafts and they destroy Ravana's chario-

426. *Ibid.*, (6-112-5).
427. *Ibid.*, (6-113).
428. *Ibid.*, (6-114-1).
429. *Ibid.*, (6-114-Chand).
430. *Ibid.*, (6-115-2, 4).
431. *Ibid.*, (6-115-Chand).
432. *Ibid.*, (6-116-4).

teer, the horses and the chariot itself with the flag.[433] Ravana feels ashamed and gets fresh ones and sends dangerous weapons, but with no purpose. He then takes up his ten lances and strikes down the four horses of Indra's chariot, but Rama raises them and sends ten shafts to cut his ten heads. They are pierced and streams of blood flow down but are not actually cut. Now Rama sends thirty shafts for the ten heads and twenty hands. They are cut, but fresh ones grow.[434] Rama goes on cutting his heads thus again and again, and the space gets filled with his heads and hands like several serpents of Ketus and Rahus. Ravana stretches ten bows and sends a rain of arrows towards the chariot of Rama and covers it for a minute like mist covering the sun.[435] Rama destroys them in no time, and again cuts the heads of Ravana, which fly crying, " Where is Rama, Lakshmana, Hanuman? " Ravana now sends the dreadful 'Shakti' on Vibhishana but Rama receives the hit and becomes a little fainted.[436] Seeing the condition of Rama, Vibhishana rushes with anger holding his club over Ravana, crying—

> " You wretch! You fool! Insensate scoundrel! You have taken up arms against Gods and men and sages and serpents! And just because you reverently offered your heads to Shiv, you have got millions of heads in exchange for every one! That's why you have escaped so far, you villain, but now death is at your door. You fool, do you expect to prosper in a quarrel with Rama? "[437]

He strikes Ravana on his chest with his club. Ravana falls on the ground and blood begins streaming, but he gets up to fight again. Vibhishana stands equal to Ravana due to Rama's grace.[438] When Vibhishana is tired, Hanuman enters with a kick on Ravana and ascends into the sky lengthening his tail. Ravana holds his tail and consequently he also flies in the sky, and the

433. *Ibid.*, (6-117-1).
434. *Ibid.*, (6-117-6).
435. *Ibid.*, (6-118-2).
436. *Ibid.*, (6-119-1, 2).
437. *Ibid.*, (6-119-3, 4).
438. *Ibid.*, (6-119).

fight between them goes on,[439], but the hit of Hanuman with thoughts on Rama brings Ravana down to the ground where the fight is resumed. Ravana becomes invisible and takes as many forms as there are monkeys. Finding many Ravanas roaring, monkeys and bears get frightened and cry for Lakshmana and Rama for rescue. Rama with one shaft dispels the illusion and there remains only the real Ravana.[440] Ravana now attacks the gods, but Angada catches hold of his legs and throws him down.[441] Ravana gets up and roars fiercely. Rama again cuts off his heads and hands, and all the monkey leaders attack him simultaneously, and Ravana floors them unconscious with arrows. Jambavan kicks on his chest.[442] Ravana falls down on the ground from the chariot. Jambavan gives him another kick. Ravana's charioteer finding the situation to be bad takes him back to Lanka.[443] That night Trijata relates to Sita all the incidents. On hearing of the re-appearance of Ravana's heads and hands, Sita gets frightened.[444] Trijata says:

> " Hearken, princess. If an arrow pierces his heart, the enemy of heaven will die; but the Lord strikes not his heart because the princess of Videha dwells therein. "[445]

Trijata then tells what Rama is really feeling, that is:

> " In his heart dwells Janaki; and in Janaki's heart is my home; and in my heart are countless worlds; the stroke of an arrow would mean universal destruction. "

Sita feels joy and grief to hear this explanation from Trijata. Trijata continues:

> " Now this is how the enemy will be slain: hearken, fair lady, and doubt no more the issue. The severing of his heads will so disturb him that the thought of you

439. *Ibid.*, (6-120-3).
440. *Ibid.*, (6-122-1).
441. *Ibid.*, (6-122-4).
442. *Ibid.*, (6-123-8).
443. *Ibid.*, (6-123-Chand).
444. *Ibid.*, (6-124-1).
445. *Ibid.*, (6-124-7).

> will escape him, and then the All-Wise Rama will strike Ravana to the heart."[446]

Ravana regaining consciousness rebukes his charioteer for having brought him away from the battlefield. After hearing his explanations, Ravana once again enters the field at sun rise. The war is resumed. The monkeys tear his body.[447] Ravana takes to foul play, and becoming invisible creates numberless ghosts, goblins, witches etc. with swords and skulls in their hands and sets them upon the monkeys.[448] The monkeys get terrified. Ravana roars and all including Lakshmana faint and cry. Ravana plays another magic by creating numberless Hanumans to surround Rama with rocks crying " Kill him, catch him, leave him not."[449] Rama by a single shaft dispels the whole illusion in a moment. Vibhishana says :

> "In the hallow of Ravana's naval there lies a pool of nectar, and by its virtue, Lord, his life is preserved."[450]

Rama immediatey takes his dreadful shafts. Rama leaves thirty one arrows like serpents of death. 'One arrow dries up the depths of Ravana's naval; the others furiously smite his heads and arms and carry them away with them. The headless, armless trunk dances upon the ground.'[451] Rama by another shaft cuts it into two. Even while dying, Ravana cries out:

> " Where is Rama, that I may challenge him and slay him in combat?"[452]

and falls down killing many monkeys and bears. The heads and hands of Ravana are carried by the shafts of Rama to fall just before Mandodari.[453] The gods in their joy beat drums and blow their trumpets. Ravana's spirit enters into the mouth of

446. *Ibid.*, (6-124-Chand).
447. *Ibid.*, (6-125-Chand).
448. *Ibid.*, (6-126-Tomar Chand 1, 2).
449. *Ibid.*, (6-126-Tomar chand 3).
450. *Ibid.*, (6-128-3).
451. *Ibid.*, (6-128 and 6-129-1).
452. *Ibid.*, (6-129-2).
453. *Ibid.*, (6-129-4).

Rama, seeing which Shiva and Brahma get astonished.[454] Mandodari falls fainted seeing the head of Ravana. Mandodari cries to him that he had this fate as he fought against Rama himself with the result that there is non left to mourn in the family,[455] that it is only due to his fate that he did not hear her words.

Mandodari cries to him:

> "You deemed to be but mortal man Hari himself, come as a fire to burn the demon forest; and dear husband, you refused to worship the Lord of all Compassion. whom Shiv and Brahma and all the gods adore. From birth you have made it your aim to injure others and this body of yours has been one mass of sin; but Rama now has granted you a place in his own realm, and him I worship, the faultless Absolute! Ah, my husband, there is no other Lord so Merciful as Raghunath, the Blessed Lord who has bestowed on you the final liberation that contemplatives hardly win."[456]

With a heavy heart now goes Vibhishana and feels grieved to see the condition of his brother. On direction, Lakshmana consoles him. Rama asks him to perform the funeral leaving all sorrow. He does accordingly. Mandodari and others return home mentally singing the glory of Rama.[457] Vibhishana comes back to Rama bowing his head.

In Valmiki, Ravana comes with fresh vigour in a new chariot. Rama gets the chariot of Indra with the charioteer Matali and his weapons.[458] Ravana cuts off the flag and sends the dreadful lance which is met equally by the 'Shakti' of Rama. Ravana seems to lose courage. Seeing this, the charioteer drives back the chariot quickly.[459] When Ravana regains consciousness, he rebukes his charioteer and asks him whether he joined the enemy. The charioteer offers his explanations, and gets a present of an orna-

454. *Ibid.*, (6-129-5).
455. *Ibid.*, (6-130-5).
456. *Ibid.*, (6-130 and the Chand).
457. *Ibid.*, (6-131).
458. Valmiki Ramayana (6-103).
459. *Ibid.*, (6-104).

ment from Ravana. Again the fight begins. The wearied Rama, deeply worried, gets up again for the fight. Now Agastya who had come to witness the war with gods, advises Rama to worship the Sun-God, as he is the Creator, Preserver and Destroyer of all life, and teaches him the mantras. Rama offers prayers to the Sun-God accordingly.[460] The final fight commences. The whole atmosphere gets filled with arrows. Both show their dexterity in trying to finish the other. Ravana shoots off severe arrows at Matali but with no effect, for he was the charioteer of Indra. Rama finally throws a pointed serpent-like arrow to cut the heads of Ravana. They are cut but in no time fresh heads grow up. They are again and again cut by Rama, but the head also go on re-appearing.[461] Rama feels surprised and anguished too. Now Matali suggests that Rama may use Brahmastra against the foe, and that the time is very opportune. Rama recites the mantras and discharges the Brahmastra against Ravana which takes the life out of him. Ravana falls dead from the chariot on the ground. All gods and monkeys and sages feel happy.[462] Vibhishana laments the loss of his brother remembering his past glory and evil. Rama also feels with Vibhishana and asks him to perform the last rites. Mandodari with Ravana's harem laments bitterly falling on her husband's corpse crying out his greatness and vices, and saying that with him she is also practically dead. Now Vibhishana performs the funeral of Ravana with Malyavan. Matali takes leave and returns to his real abode with the chariot. Mandodari and all demonesses return to Lanka, and Vibhishana comes to Rama.[463]

In Adhyatma Ramayana, Ravana returns to Lanka after receiving over his chest a sharp shaft from Rama, and consults Shukracharya[464] the Guru of the Demons. He advises him to perform a sacrifice for victory and Ravana does it in a lonely cave underground. Vibhishana gets signs through the smoke coming up and informs Rama. Rama sends Hanuman, Angada and other great warriors. They enter Lanka and on the guidance of Sarama, the wife of Vibhishana, reach the place of sacrifice. Angada brings

460. *Ibid.*, (6-106).
461. *Ibid.*, (6-109).
462. *Ibid.*, (6-110).
463. *Ibid.*, (6-113).
464. **Adhyatma Ramayana (6-10-4).**

over there Mandodari dragging her by her tuft.[465] Ravana gets extremely infuriated at her being insulted. Similarly other wives of Ravana are also ill-treated. Mandodari laments accusing Ravana of his shamelessness. Ravana comes up with the sword, and meanwhile the monkeys destroy the sacrifice and return to Rama. Ravana consoles Mandodari and says that he will immediately go and slay the two mortals or get killed by Rama, and asks her to kill Sita and burn herself with him.[466] Mandodari tries her level best to dissuade Ravana from his persistence and appeals to him to return Sita to Rama, give away the kingdom to Vibhishana and take to the worship of Rama and Sita, the Vishnu and Lakshmi themselves, in the forest with her.[467] But Ravana says that he will get salvation by dying at the hands of Rama, the God-incarnate, adding that it was with this purpose that he abduced Sita.[468] Ravana goes to fight the battle. After a combat with Hanuman he goes to Rama. Indra sends his chariot fully armed with Matali, the charioteer, to Rama.[469] Rama-Ravana war commences. Ravana hits at Rama, Matali, the horses and the flag with severe arrows. Rama sends Aindrastra on Ravana and cuts off his heads. To the surprise of even Rama, several heads of Ravana begin raining from the sky. Ravana stands still there unhurt. Vibhishana tells Rama that Brahma had once told him that Ravana's heads and hands will go on growing afresh though cut, as he has the pot of nector in his stomach which should be dried up by Agneyastra at first to bring about his death. Rama sends the same and then cuts off his nine heads and eighteen hands.[470] Ravana gets extremely wild and even now sends a very dreadful Shakti on Vibhishana but Rama cuts it on the way.[471] He continues attacking Rama with several weapons. On the suggestion of Matali, Rama finally discharges violently the Brahmastra on his chest and Ravana falls dead on the ground.[472] The spirit of Ravana comes out of his

465. *Ibid.*, (6-10-24).
466. *Ibid.*, (6-10-41 to 43).
467 *Ibid.*, (6-10-54).
468. *Ibid.*, (6-10-57).
469. *Ibid.*, (6-11-26).
470. Ibid., (6-11-52 to 56). **See 58 also.**
471. *Ibid.*, (6-11-57).
472. *Ibid.*, (6-11-73).

body and enters Rama to the surprise of all and they exclaim—'Blessed is the fate of Mahatma Ravana.'[473] Narada explains the secret to the gods and says that Ravana due to his enmity to Rama, had all along been thinking of the Lord, and that has benefited him more than initiation of a preceptor. Ravana, having had his end at the hands of Rama, attains eternal salvation, becoming one with God.[474] Now Mandodari and other demonesses come wailing to Ravana's corpse. Vibhishana weeps very much grieved. Rama asks Lakshmana to console Vibhishana and get the funeral ceremony performed. Vibhishana feels unable to do the rites to one who, though a brother, has been devoid of all righteousness and indulged lavishly in women of others.[475] Rama explains to him the principle of '*Nil Nisi Bonum*' that after death all animosity ceases and he may duly perform the rtes. Vibhishana then performs the rites and sends the women home and himself comes to Rama.[476]

On a comparative study the following features are noticed :

(a) Only in Kambar is mentioned Rama's suspicion about the chariot of Indra and his taking counsel for using the same after the horses recites the vedas.

(b) Only Kambar has related the advancing of Mahodara on Lakshmana and Rama killing him.

(c) The vigorous fight of Rama and Ravana in the sky as to shatter even meteors is described only by Kambar.

(d) Rama's flag on the chariot being cut and Garuda taking its place on the flag-pole is stated only in Kambar.

(e) Kambar alone makes the dead demons reappear by Ravana's magic, and the same being destroyed by Rama by a single shaft.

(f) The description of the battle between Rama and Ravana differs in length and intensity from epic to epic.

473. *Ibid.*, (6-11-78, 79).
474. *Ibid.*, (6-11-83 to 85).
475. *Ibid.*, (6-12-31, 32).
476. *Ibid.*, (6-12-41).

(g) In Kambar, Rama himself uses the Brahmastra without any advice or suggestion. In Tulasi, Ravana dies by thirty one shafts of Rama. In Valmiki, the Brahmastra is used on Matali's advice. In Adhyatma, Agneyastra and Brahmastra are used on Vibhishana's and Matali's suggestions respectively. The pot of nector is not mentioned by Kambar and Valmiki.

(h) Only in Kambar, Mandodari dies with Ravana whereas in the other three, Mandodari returns home after the performance of the funeral rites by Vibhishana.

(i) The special sacrifice performed by Ravana before his final fight is described only in Tulasi and Adhyatma.

(j) Only in Tulasi, Ravana's magic creates many false Ramas and Lakshmanas who are seen by all but Rama.

(k) Ravana's sending the 'Shakti' on Vibhishana and Rama receiving it on himself is described only by Tulasidas at this place.

(l) A fight between Vibhishana and Ravana is related here only by Tulasidas.

(m) The fight between Ravana and Hanuman in the sky is described in Tulasi only.

(n) Ravana creating by magic as many Ravanas as there were monkeys is mentioned only in Tulasi.

(o) Trijata relating the incidents to Sita is mentioned only in Tulasi.

(p) Ravana's phantasm creating numberless Hanumans is stated only by Tulasidas.

(q) The arrival of Agastya and his advice to Rama to worship the Sun God is stated only in Valmiki.

(r) Ravana's consulting Shukracharya is stated only in the Adhyatma. He advises Ravana to perform a special sacrifice. Though the performance of the sacrifice is described in Tulasi also, the advice received from Shukracharya is not mentioned there.

(s) Only in Adhyatma Ramayana, the wife of Vibhishana, directs the monkeys to the place of the sacrifice by a sign, and Angada drags Mandodari by her tuft to the place of sacrifice in front of Ravana, where she laments of Ravana's shamelessness.

(t) Ravana's innate desire to get salvation at the hands of Rama is mentioned only in Adhyatma.

(u) In Adhyatma only, Ravana throws a 'Shakti' on Vibhishana and the same is cut by Rama on the way, whereas in Valmiki Rama receives it on himself.

(v) In Tulasi, the spirit of Ravana is said to have entered Rama after his death, following Adhyatma. It is not so in Kambar and Valmiki. Only in Adhyatma, Narada explains its secret.

(w) Vibhishana's disinclination to perform Ravana's obsequies on account of his unrighteous conduct, and Rama's advice that after death such things should be forgotten and that Vibhishana should perform the obsequies, do not find mention in Kambar and Tulasi, whereas both Valmiki and Adhyatma have given detailed account of the same.

(x) Only Kambar's Rama does not consider his victory over Ravana in war as one of special credit, for Ravana has received blows on his back and has run from the battle-field during the war. Besides, Ravana had already been defeated by Kartaveeryarjuna, and also because it was a victory only in war.

14. *Fire Ordeal of Sita* :

Kambar : Rama asks Lakshmana to go with the monkey warriors and crown Vibhishana as king of Lanka. Coronation of Vibhishana is accordingly performed by Lakshmana.[477] Vibhishana comes and pays his respects to Rama. Rama offers Vibhishana necessary advice for proper administration. Then Rama asks Hanuman to convey the happy news of victory in war and Ravana's death to Sita.[478] Hanuman accordingly goes dancing in his exultations and passes on the pleasant news to pining Sita. Sita's face

477. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (6-37-6).
478. *Ibid.*, (6-37-14).

blossoms 'with joy and it appears as if the solitary moon of her countenance suddenly waxed into its full brilliance in one day instead of reaching it stage by stage as the planet does.'[479] She feels immensely pleased and remains spell-bound with joy. Not finding anything for a fitting reward to Hanuman for his prior timely message with the ring of Rama and for the present happy news, she says:

> "You have been so kind to me that I do not find any other means of expressing my heart-felt gratitude towards you except by bowing down before you (worshipping you with my head literally)."[480]

Hanuman now requests her to permit him to 'burn all the demonesses in their own sin' except Trijata, who were tormenting her so long. Hearing this the demonesses immediately fall at the feet of Sita and seek for protection. Sita tells them not to fear and asks Hanuman:

> "What harm have these e'er done but spoke to me
> E'en as he bid them speak?"[481]

She says further that the demonesses are not worse than the inhuman hunch-back maid of Kaikeyi and requests Hanuman to pardon them. thus 'carving a boon for her enemies'.

Rama asks Vibhishana to bring Sita with due decorations.[482] Vibhishana goes to Sita, bows and requests her to decorate herself and come to Rama. Sita is not inclined to have any decorations,[483] but on knowing that it was her lord's desire, she agrees. After bath goddesses decorate her and she is taken to Rama on a palanquin. She sees Rama, gets down and with tears of joy bows before him, thinking:

> "* * It matters not if hence
> My mind I lose or even here fall dead."[484]

Rama utters very harsh words to her as follows:

> "You loved the fleshy form and honour stained:
> And yet died not: but risked your conduct pure

479. *Ibid.*, (6-37-20) Trn. by C. P. Venkatarama Iyer.
480. *Ibid.*, (6-37-28)
481. *Ibid.*, (6-37-34).
482. *Ibid.*, (6-37-37).
483. *Ibid.*, (6-37-40).
484. *Ibid.*, (6-37-59).

And stayed content one year in capital
Of Rakshasas of evil walk of life.
With what design have you returned unabashed?
Is it that I would cherish you?[485]

" 'Twas not to rescue you I filled the sea,
And felled down root and branch the Rakshasas
With all their arms of might like thunderbolts,
And overthrew the lonely foe as well.
It was for naught but to redeem my name
That I to Lanka came?[486]

" The lustre of your virtues all has gone:
In noble lineage you were not born,
But like the spineless worm, born from the earth,
You have but played your part too well."[487]

" Womanhood and its glory Noble Birth,
And the adamantine will called chastity,
Enlightenment, Propriety, Truth itself,
By your birth have vanished like the noted fame of the
King without beneficiance."[488]

All those present on the scene are wonder-struck at Rama's treatment. Sita is horrified, sheds out tears of blood, falls unconscious with a sigh:

" And she recoiled e'en like the lovely deer,
By raging thirst consumed in desert wild,
(And watched by teeming vultures from above)
Which sees a water-hole, but quicker still,
Sees a barrier insuperable!"[489]

485. *Ibid.*, (6-37-62).
486. *Ibid.*, (6-37-63).
487. *Ibid.*, (6-37-65).
488. *Ibid.*, (6-37-66).
489. *Ibid.*, (6-37-71).

However Sita soon recovers courage and appeals to Rama with very great restraint:

"The son of Vayu came and seeing me
Did truly say, 'My Lord, he would have come'?
My languished state? In sooth, a messenger
He failed to be!"[490]

"Austerities mine, and chastity so pure,
And all that I endured so long down here
Have madness been, and yea, in vain. For, them,
O Noble one, you have not realised!"[491]

"I may be the chastest to the world entire,
And of heart unfaltering, beyond e'en Brahm
To shake. Ah, foolish me! If you, who are
The focus of the world deny, would God
Acknowledge me?"[492]

"If thus with them, for whom do I retail
Down here austerities mine void of flaws?
Far better death than aught else; fitting too
It is, O Ved!—The same is your command;
The same my fate as fell!"[493]

Expressing these sentiments Sita asks Lakshmana to set fire, and he, with the permission of Rama makes it ready for Sita. She goes near it when the whole universe and all living beings begin to shudder. Addressing the fire, Sita says:

"If by thought, or word I'm stained, let fury yours
Burn me, O Lord of the flames!"[494]

After paying reverences to her lord, she jumps into the fire.[495] The god of fire with Sita in his arms unhurt emerges out of the

490. *Ibid.*, (6-37-73).
491. *Ibid.*, (6-37-74).
492. *Ibid.*, (6-37-75).
493. *Ibid.*, (6-37-77).
494. *Ibid.*, (6-37-84).
495. *Ibid.*, (6-37-85).

fire and appeals to Rama to accept her. Rama accedes to the request with fire as the witness for Sita's chastity. At the request of the gods, Brahma and Shiva tell Rama about his omnipotent nature. Shiva informs Dasharatha in the heaven about the fire ordeal of Sita and suggests that Rama and Sita be consoled. Dasharatha appears before Rama.[496] Rama bows to his father. Dasharatha recollects the past and tells him that the cruel words of Kaikeyi driving Rama to forest had till then been pricking him in spite of his death, and that it is now that he feels reconciled. He also tells his son that he has offered him highest of bliss equal to Brahma's position. He then consoles Sita and Lakshmana to reconcile themselves with what had happened in the past and praises their actions. He then tells Rama that he may ask for any boon. Rama feels happy and requests his father to accept Kaikeyi and Bharata as wife and son respectively, saying :

> " * * * Grant me
> Today that she may once again be mother
> To me, and he may brother as ever before."[497]

Dasharatha excuses the faultless Bharata, but expresses his inability to pardon Kaikeyi and says :

> " The heartless one that robbed thee of thy crown
> And made thee wear this hermits weeds, shall not
> Escape my curse."[498]

But the noble Rama again pleads :

> " The sin was not my mother's, but rather mine,
> That I saw not the kingly office is
> The pregnant source of endless sins and crimes,
> And at thy bidding undertook to rule
> Ayodhya, thyself living. Once again,
> Therefore, let me plead with thee call back that curse."[499]

The boons asked for by Rama are granted. All the gods rejoice saying that the boons granted to Kaikeyi were two and

496. *Ibid.*, (6-37-116).
497. *Ibid.*, (6-37-129).
498. *Ibid.*, (6-37-130).
499. *Ibid.*, (6-37-131).

that the boons now granted are also two, thus compensating each other. Then Dasharatha goes back to heaven. Now Rama asks the gods to bring back to life the dead monkeys, and the same is done. The dead monkeys jump in joy and bow before Rama.[500]

Tulasi :

Rama calls Lakshmana and asks him to go with Sugriva, Hanuman, Angada, Nala, Jambavan etc. and have Vibhishana crowned as king, as he could not leave the forest according to the words of his father.[501] The coronation is accordingly celebrated and king Vibhishana comes and bows before Rama. Then Rama asks Hanuman to convey to Sita the news of victory and Ravana's death, and bring her. Hanuman goes into Lanka and now the demons and demonesses honour him. Hanuman conveys the news to Sita who is exhilarated with joy. Sita sheds tears of joy and tells Hanuman that there is nothing in the three worlds which would be a suitable reward for him for conveying such a happy news and assures of the eternal assistance of Rama and Lakshmana.[502] She expresses her eagerness to see Rama. Hanuman returns to Rama and conveys what she said. Now Rama sends Vibhishana with Hanuman to bring Sita with due respect. With appropriate ceremonies, Sita is brought to Rama in a beautiful palanquin. As all were anxious to have a glimpse of Sita, he desires Sita to come on foot,[503] and the same is done. Now Rama desires to bring back the real Sita who had entered into fire[504] and utters a few harsh words terrifying the demonesses.[505] To comply with the words of Rama, Sita asks Lakshmana to lit a pyre. He does it understanding the wish of Rama. Sita prays to the fire :

> " If in my heart, in thought and word and deed I have never left Raghubir and turned to another, then, O Fire, who knowest the thoughts of all, be thou to me as cooling sandalwood! "[506]

500. *Ibid.,* (6-37-137).
501. Ram Charit Manas (6-132-2).
502. *Ibid.,* (6-133).
503. *Ibid.,* (6-134-6).
504. *Ibid.,* (6-134-7).
505. *Ibid.,* (6-134).
506. *Ibid.,* (6-135-4).

So saying she jumps into the fire. The God of fire manifests himself taking the hand of true Sita and seats her by the left of Rama. Gods and monkeys and others assembled are greatly rejoiced. Matali takes leave and goes to Indra. Gods pay tributes to Rama, and Brahma sings his glory. Now arrives Dasharatha with eyes full of tears.[507] Rama and Lakshmana bow before him, and Dasharatha blesses them. Rama tells him that his victory over the demon is entirely due to his virtues and bestows on him perfect knowledge. Now Dasharatha pays obeisance again and again to Rama and returns to heaven happily.[508] Now Indra offers his hymns of praise, and requests Rama as to what he should do. Rama asks him to bring all the dead bears and monkeys to life. Indra causes a rain of nectar and the bears and monkeys get up happily and go to Rama.[509] This is not however the case with the dead demons, for they had already been relieved of the trouble of birth and death.[510] All the gods leave for their places in their planes. Now Shiva prays to Rama with folded hands to "Dwell ever in the grove that is thy servant's soul."[511] Before leaving, Shiva also tells Rama that he would come at the time of his coronation at Ayodhya.

In Valmiki, Matali returns and Vibhishana is crowned by Lakshmana as directed by Rama. Rama sends Hanuman to convey the news to Sita and he does so. Sita is overwhelmed with joy and feels that nothing on earth would be a suitable reward for Hanuman. He asks her for permission to kill all the remaining demonesses, but Sita stops him from doing so and expresses her anxiety to see Rama. Hanuman conveys to Rama Sita's desire.[512] Rama with tears asks Vibhishana the king, to bring Sita well decorated. Vibhishana approached Sita and tells her to get decorated, but she feels like meeting Rama in her present condition. But after understanding that it was Rama's desire that she should be decorated, she does so and comes in a palanquin. To fulfil the desire of the people there, Rama asks Sita to be brought on foot,

507. *Ibid.*, ((6-139-1).
508. *Ibid.*, (6-139-3, 4).
509. *Ibid.*, (6-141-3).
510. *Ibid.*, (6-141-4).
511. *Ibid.*, (6-143-2).
512. Valmiki Ramayana (6-115).

though Lakshmana, Sugriva and Hanuman get a little uneasy about it. Sita comes walking near Rama and says weeping, 'Aryaputra!'[513] Rama says that he fought and got victory in order to keep up his own honour and not for her sake. Expressing his suspicion at her conduct, he tells her to live with Lakshmana, Bharata, Shatrughna, Sugriva, Vibhishana or anyone else she may choose, for she dwelt in another's house and a person like Ravana could never have left such a beauty pure.[514] Sita is stunned to hear this from Rama and requests Lakshmana weeping to set a pyre. He does so with the silent approval of Rama. Praying to the fire she jumps into it[515] but God Agni appears bearing witness to her spotless character and requests Rama to accept her. Stating that he did so to test and prove her chastity about which he had no doubt personally, Rama receives her by his side.[516] Brahma now offers his hymns of glory to Rama and Sita as incarnations of Narayana and Lakshmi respectively. Shiva also appears and offers his hymn of praise to Rama and requests Rama to return to Ayodhya to console all there and ascend the throne. Now appears Dasharatha also on the scene and blesses Rama. Rama requests him to accept Kaikeyi and Bharata as his wife and son respectively, and Dasharatha does so. Then he praises Lakshmana and consoles Sita and returns back.[517] Then Indra appears and Rama asks him to bring back all the dead monkeys to life and the same is done. Dead monkeys come back to life and rise up. The gods request Rama to come to Ayodhya early and return to their respective places.[518]

In Adhyatma too the events are in the same order. However, Rama here decides to get back the real Sita by relinquishing the Maya Sita,[519] and tells king Vibhishana to bring Sita. He goes with Hanuman and brings Sita decorated. Sita here does not object to her being decorated. After the fire ordeal, the God of Fire states that Maya Sita has disappeared after finishing her work.[520]

513. *Ibid.*, (6-116).
514. *Ibid.*, (6-117).
515. *Ibid.*, (6-118).
516. *Ibid.*, (6-120).
517. *Ibid.*, (6-121).
518. *Ibid.*, (6-122).
519. Adhyatma Ramayana (6-12-67).
520. *Ibid.*, (6-13-22).

Here Rama orders Indra to shower nector and bring back all the monkeys to life.[521] The same is done by Indra.

On a comparative study the following features are observed:

(a) Only in Kambar, Sita says that the only thing that she can do to reward Hanuman is to bow down before him for all the good done by him.

(b) The initial disagreement of Sita to have decorations on the words of Vibhishana is mentioned in Kambar as in Valmiki, but not in Tulasi and Adhyatma.

(c) The harsh words uttered by Rama, and Sita's apt reply is decribed in Kambar and Valmiki but not in Tulasi and Adhyatma.

(d) Sita who comes out after the fire ordeal is the same in Kambar and Valmiki but in Tulasi and Adhyatma, it is Maya Sita who jumps into the fire and the real Sita comes out from it, and this fact is known only to Rama and the God of fire.

(e) It is only in Kambar that Dasharatha at first accedes to only one request of Rama viz., accepting Bharata as son, but not the other. He excuses Kaikeyi, only when prevailed upon by Rama taking the blame on himself. In Valmiki both the requests of Rama are immediately sanctioned. Tulasi and Adhyatma refer to no such requests.

(f) The honour offered to Hanuman by the demons and demonesses when he went to Lanka to convey the news to Sita is mentioned only by Tulasi. However a mention is found in Adhyatma.[522]

(g) Only Tulasi, Sita offers Hanuman the eternal assistance of Rama and Lakshmana as a reward for his deeds.

(h) It is only in Tulasi that Rama bestows perfect knowledge on Dasharatha, getting which he bows to Rama repeatedly while returning.

521. *Ibid.*, (6-13-38).
522. *Ibid.*, (6-13-53).

(i) Only in Valmiki, Rama goes to the extent of asking Sita to live with Lakshmana, Bharata, Shatrughna, Sugriva, Vibhishana or anyone else whom she may like before the fire ordeal. Rama also states emphatically that 'Ravana could never have left such a beauty pure'.

15. *Return to Ayodhya*:

Kambar: Gods now remind Rama about the end of the period of fourteen years and request him to go to Ayodhya where Bharata is anxiously awaiting him.[523] On this remainder, Rama enquires Vibhishana for a means of quick transport, and he informs all about the Pushpaka plane and its powers. With Rama's consent he brings the plane. Rama gets into it and gods shower flowers on it.[524] Then Sita and Lakshmana get into the plane. Rama now advises Vibhishana, Sugriva, Angada, Hanuman, Jambhavan and all monkeys to return to their respective places and lead a righteous and peaceful life. But they express their keen desire to accompany him to Ayodhya. Rama agrees and all get into the plane[525]which is big enough to hold all the living beings of the fourteen worlds. On the words of Rama all acquire human forms.[526] The plane flies northwards. Rama goes on showing to Sita on the way important places like the bridge, Podihai Hills of Agastya.[527] Tiruvengada Hills etc. and reaches Kishkindha. Here Sita expresses her desire to take with them the monkey-women also-

"If I shall reach Ayodhya all alone,
My womanhood woud greatly clouded be:
'Tis duty thine to take into care
The Vanar damsels too!"[528]

Rama accepts the suggestion. Sugriva sends Hanuman and the monkey-women brought by him are taken into the Pushpaka. The plane resumes its flight. Rama shows to Sita the river Godavari

523. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (6-37-140 and 141).
524. *Ibid.*, (6-37-146).
525. *Ibid.*, (6-37-158).
526. *Ibid.*, (6-37-162).
527. *Ibid.*, (6-37-174 — Rama tells Sita, "Mark! This is the mountain where the father of Tamil Grammar Agastya resides" (C. P. Venkatarama Iyer.)
528. *Ibid.*, (6-37-176).

Dandakaranya, Chitrakoota and reach the Ashrama of Bharadwaja. The sage requests Rama and others to be his guests for a day, takes Sita and Rama to his hermitage and then tells them the condition of Bharata. Rama sees that the monkeys have their necessities in plenty wherever they go.[529] All have a sumptuous heavenly feast. Rama sends Hanuman to Bharata with his ring to announce the news of his arrival and report back his reactions.[530] Hanuman accordingly goes to Bharata in no time after informing Guha on the way about Rama's arrival. Bharata, at Nandigram, is leading the life of a true ascetic, always thinking of the day of arrival of Rama at Ayodhya.[531] Astrologers inform him that the due date for Rama's arrival is come, hearing which Bharata falls fainted. He begins brooding about the cause of delay for his arrival at the appointed time:

> " He wouldn't forget the day agreed with me?
> Nor be unmindful of his mother's love
> Or anguish mine, and overstay his time
> I fear some evil has befallen him. "[532]

Soon he is heartened to think about the prowess of Rama and exclaims:

> " But who can stand before my hero brother?
> Nor gods, nor men, nor beings of the world
> Beyond, nor e'en the Three supreme could win
> If him they faced in war. "[533]

But again he is greatly disturbed in mind and decides to commit suicide by falling into the fire:

> " But may it be
> He thinks I might desire the crown and stays
> Away in the wilderness so that I might
> Enjoy the throne in peace? But now the time

529. *Ibid.*, (6-37-199).
530. *Ibid.*, (6-37-202).
531. *Ibid.*, (6-37-210).
532. *Ibid.*, (6-37-214).
533. *Ibid.*, (6-37-215).

Is past that I should think and hesitate:
I can my torture bear no more, I'll die
And end my anguish with my life!"[534]

Bharata weeps and requests Shatrughna to accept the kingdom, as he is determined to fall into the fire and die and as Rama had not arrived as promised.[535] Shatrughna is surprised. Closing his ears as if poison had entered into him, he falls on the ground spell-bound. After regaining consciousness he gets up and asks Bharata as to what wrong he had done to him? Deploring his lot he says to Bharata:

"Among the three brothers of Rama, one had accompanied him into the forests to reign in deserts rather than suffer his separation in the town; and now another brother has determined to end his earthly existence, as Rama had not returned by the appointed date. Should I not be ashamed in their presence to be offered the crown and kingdom?"[536]

But still Bharata insists on Shatrughna setting up a big fire for him. He tells him that Rama would surely come to Ayodhya hearing of his death. Kaushalya comes to know of Bharata's intention and comes running beating her stomach. All others—gods and sages alike—hasten to the scene. Kaushalya meets Bharata on his way, embraces him, chides him, applauds him and says that it is only destiny which had sent Rama to forest and his father to heaven and that what he now proposes to do is a thoughtless act. She expatiates on his righteous nature:

"Thou knowest not thy greatness, Bharata!
We have not seen a higher righteousness
With these our eyes than thy own holy life."[537]

Comparing him with Rama she says:

"* * * Ten million million Ramas e'en
Can never approach the love immaculate

534. *Ibid.*, (6-37-216).
535. *Ibid.*, (6-37-220).
536. *Ibid.*, (6-37-223).
537. *Ibid.*, (6-37-231).

That burns within thy soul! if thou shouldst die
That art but Dharma's other self, can earth
And heaven and all that breethes remain alive?"[538]

However assuring him of Rama's arrival very shortly, she says:

If this day tarries Rama, to-morrow he
Is sure to come. Think not he'd break the word
He himself gave to thee. To-morrow if
We see him not, be sure he has ceased to live!"[539]

Continuing she pleads further that he should desist from the action proposed even if Rama is dead, lest the very roots of Solar race should vanish, and ends with a word of tribute to Bharata—

"* * * And thou art Dharm —
Itself in flesh and blood!"[540]

In spite of this exhortation, Bharata stands firm in his determination and says:

"* * * I will not preserve
My life and risk th' unduteous violation
Of my father's words and all traditions old
Of our race. I'll stand by the oath I made, and keep
My word. I'll also give my life for truth
And go to heaven. As Rama is the son
And heir, the duty's his alone to save
The state. 'Tis wrong for others to wear the crown."[541]

He also says that it will prove his innocence. He goes worshipping round the fire thrice. All stand lamenting bitterly. Hanuman appears shouting:

"My lord is come, the noble hero's come!
Can he survive if thou shouldst take thy life?"[542]

538. *Ibid.*, (6-37-232).
539. *Ibid.*, (6-37-233).
540. *Ibid.*, (6-37-234).
541. *Ibit.*, (6-37-237, 238).
542. *Ibid.*, (6-37-240).

and puts down the fire with his strong hands and legs. He shows the ring which he had brought as an insignia from Rama[543]-and tells him the cause of the delay to the consolation and joy of those present. Bharata is so overjoyed that, in the words of V. V. S. Iyer :

> " He kissed it, embraced it, and pressed it into his eyes. His emaciated body grew to itself again at the touch of the beloved jewel. He laughed and wept, saulted and embraced Hanuman again and again, fell at his feet, and leaped with excess of joy.
>
> 'Dance, dance away with joy', he said to those
> Around; 'run, fly to where our Rama is!
> Let's sing a song of joy! O sinners, why
> Fall ye not at the feet of Hanuman?'[544]
> And then,
> The tongues that had been crying for grief, began
> To shout for joy; all eyes began to dry,
> And heads that ploughed the ground were lifted up,
> And all did clasp in worship Hanuman's feet."[545]

Questioned by Bharata, Hanuman says who he is and shows his Viswa-roopa.[546] Bharata requests him to resume his old form, and offers enormous presents, and all honours. He asks Shatrughna to make the necessary arrangements for the reception of Rama, and starts 'with an immense multitude' to the hermitage of sage Bharadwaja. On the way Hanuman tells the story from the time of their stay at Chitrakoota upto that moment including the coming of Dasharatha from heaven forgiving him and his mother. Bharata feels that he has not been of any help to Rama in exile. They cross the Ganges. Hearing no noise at a reasonable distance from the herimitage, he doubts Rama's arrival. Hanuman coolly says that after a sumptuous dinner the monkeys are having a sound sleep and that he will be shortly seeing Rama. Guha by now comes there with his army. Rama, Lakshmana and Guha meet and embrace one another enquiring about their welfare.[547] Rama introduces Sugriva and others to Guha. Then all get into the

543. *Ibid.*, (6-37-245).
544. *Ibid.*, (6-37-251).
545. *Ibit.*, (6-37-247). See 'Kamba Ramayanam—A Study' p. 309.
546. *Ibid.*, (6-37-257).
547. *Ibid.*, (6-37-313).

Pushpaka and reach near Ayodhya. Hanuman now shows the plane and points out Sita, Lakshmana and Rama.[548] Bharata sees Rama as one sees a long lost father. The plane comes down. The three mothers, the two younger brothers and Vashishtha enter the plane and Rama falls at the feet of Vashishtha.[549] He takes him up. Then all the youngsters fall at the feet of elders and all embrace each other. Rama introduces to Bharata and Shatrugna all who have accompanied him. Then all go seeing Ayodhya from the plane and reach Nandigram.[550]

Tulasi: Vibhishana requests Rama to take some rest in his place and 'make him altogether his own and take him also to the city of Ayodhya,[551] Rama says that considering the condition of Bharata, even a second is like an aeon and asks him to make all arrangements for starting to Ayodhya,[552] for, should the time lapse, he may not find Bharata alive. He adds that Vibhishana shall rule over Lanka for a full aeon ever thinking of him, and later 'enter his realm where all good men go.'[553] Vibhishana clasps the feet of the lord. The monkeys and bears also feel happy and do the same singing the glory of Rama. Vibhishana brings the Pushpaka plane, filled with innumerable and invaluable stones and dresses. Rama asks him to fly above and shower them from the sky. He does so for all to select according to their choice. The monkeys take the precious stones, bite them and throw away finding no taste, seeing which Rama, Sita and Lakshmana smile.[554] Thus Rama crackes jokes with the monkeys. Then all wear select dresses and appear before Rama. Rama asks them all to go to their respective homes and without any fear be thinking of him.[555] They all go away with a heavy heart, but Jambavan, Sugriva, Nala, Angada, Hanuman, Vibhishana and a few other leaders stay over there with their eyes full of tears and hearts full of love. Rama, understanding their desire, takes them also in the plane and starts towards north. Rama goes on showing important places like the bridge, Rameshwaram, Dandaka forest, Chitrakoota etc. They get down at the

548. *Ibid.*, (6-37-323, 324).
549. *Ibid.*, (6-37-341).
550. *Ibid.*, (6-37-358).
551. Ram Charit Manas (6-144-4).
552. *Ibid.*, (6-144, 145).
553. *Ibid.*, (6-147).
554. *Ibid.*, (6-148-4).
555. *Ibid.*, (6-150).

places of Agastya and other sages and get their blessings, and continue their flight, Rama showing Sita the rivers Jamuna and Ganges and Prayaga. Finally they come near Ayodhya, and show their reverences to it. Rama then directs the plane to be taken to Prayaga and all have a bath in the Triveni. Rama asks Hanuman to assume the forms of a Brahmin and convey the news of their coming to Bharata and report back his reaction.[556] Hearing about Rama's arrival, Guha calls all the boat men.[557] Sita offers her prayers to the River Ganges. Guha falls at Rama's feet. Rama embraces him.

* * * * *

Here the Lanka Kanda of Tulasi Ramayana comes to an end and next follows Uttarakanda.

* * * * *

There is one day more for the end of the period of fourteen years. All at Ayodhya are immersed in the thought of Rama's return. Bharata sees some good omens, and feels assured about the return of Rama in time. He however states that if he does not do so, he will certainly end his life.[558] Hanuman, in the disguise of a Brahmin, comes and informs him about Rama's return with Sita and Lakshmana after killing Ravana.[559] On being asked who he is, he announces himself as Hanuman. Bharata's grief vanishes. He enquires Hanuman about Rama's welfare. Hanuman tells him about the great affection that Rama has for him and returns to Rama and tells him all that he saw and heard.[560] Rama feels greatly pleased and all get into the plane and start. Bharata comes to Ayodhya from Nandigram and informs all about Rama's arrival to their immense happiness. Bharata with Vashishtha, Shatrughna and brahmins starts to meet Rama. The plane lands near Ayodhya and Rama directs the Pushpaka to go back to Kubera, the original owner of that plane (from whom Ravana had snatched it). It goes back happily.[561] Bharata comes with the people. He gets hold of the feet of Rama and all meet with

556. *Ibid.*, (6-157-1).
557. *Ibid.*, (6-157-3).
558. *Ibid.*, (7-5-4).
559. *Ibid.*, (7-7-3).
560. *Ibid.*, (7-8).
561. *Ibid.*, (7-13).

tears of joy. Now Rama assumes as many forms as there were people, and meets them all simultaneously[562] and relieves all of their sorrow. Kaikeyi feels greatly ashamed to meet Rama, and Rama meets her again and again. Sita meets all her mothers-in-law. Rama introduces all who had accompanied him to Bharata stating that they are dearer to him than Bharata himself.[563] All houses and places are decorated. Rama goes to the house of Kaikeyi first understanding that she is still feeling the sense of shame for her past action.[564] He pleases her with affectionate words. Then he goes to his own house. All the people are extrmeely happy.

In Valmiki, king Vibhishana requests Rama to have bath etc. but Rama declines to do so and expresses his desire to reach Ayodhya as early as possible. Vibhishana informs of the availability of Pushpaka for quick transport. Rama wants the plane to be got ready. He gets it and offers dresses and valuables to monkeys. On their request, Rama takes them all with him in the plane and the plane starts.[565] On the way Rama shows the important places to Sita, and they reach Kishkindha. On the suggestion of Sita, the Vanara-women are also taken with them. After seeing Ayodhya from above[566] they reach the hermitage of Bharadwaja and get his blessings. They stay there for a day on the request of the sage. Rama sends Hanuman to convey the news of his arrival to Bharata and Guha and come back. Hanuman assumes human form and goes to Bharata after meeting Guha. He conveys the happy news to him and tells him about himself and the story in brief.[567] Bharata informs all about the arrival of Rama and asks Shatrughna to make all arrangements for the reception of Rama. The whole city is decorated. Then Bharata, Shatrughna, Mothers, Ministers and gurus start to receive Rama. Bharata is in the garb of a hermit and has the sandals of Rama on his head with the royal umberella above. After going a long way Bharata asks Hanuman the reason for there being no noise of monkeys and Hanuman tells him of the grant feast by Bharadwaja and shows the Pushpaka plane

562. *Ibid.*, (7-15-3).
563. *Ibid.*, (7-18-4).
564. *Ibid.*, (7-22-1).
565. Valmiki Ramayana (6-124).
566. *Ibid.*, (6-125).
567. *Ibid.*, (6-128).

appearing above like a moon. Bharata sees Rama seated in the plane like Indra, and shows reverence. The plane is taken down. Bharata bows to Rama, Sita and Lakshmana, and embraces all others introduced by Rama. Bharata tells Sugriva, "We are four and you are our fifth brother."[568] Then Rama meets mothers Kaushalya, Sumitra and Kaikeyi and all the people. Bharata puts the sandals on Rama's feet and gives back the kingdom. Then all get into the plane and reach Nandigram and the Pushpaka is sent back to Kubera.[569]

In Adhyatma Ramayana also, the order of events is the same, but the monkeys and warriors return home after receiving valuables from Vibhishana, and only the top personages accompany Rama. On the request of Sita, the Vanara women are taken to Ayodhya.[570] Hanuman assumes the form of a man while going to Bharata from the place of Bharadwaja. He meets Bharata at Nandigram and sees him in hermit's garb seated with the sandals before him surrounded by ministers and important persons of Ayodhya. After hearing the news from Hanuman, Bharata in his ecstasy of joy presents him 'a lakh of cows, hundred rich villages and sixteen beautiful girls.'[571] Bharata comes to meet Rama with the sandals on his head. The monkeys are now in men's form.[572] Bharata embraces Sugriva and tells him that he is their fifth brother.[573] Bharata puts the sandals at the feet of Rama thereby offering back the kingdom to him.[574] All go to Nandigram and Rama sends the Pushpaka plane to Kubera.

A comparative study shows the special features noted below:

(a) In Kambar, gods remind Rama about the end of the period of fourteen years and request him to return to Ayodhya whereas in Tulasi and the two source epics, Rama himself tells Vibhishana that he must return to Ayodhya.

568. *Ibid.*, (6-129).
569. *Ibid.*, (6-129).
570. Adhyatma Ramayana (6-14-8).
571. *Ibid.*, (6-14-61).
572. *Ibid.*, (6-14-88).
573. *Ibid.*, (6-14-90).
574. *Ibid.*, (6-14-93, 94).

(b) In Kambar, Rama returns with all the monkey warriors, but in Tulasi, only the top leaders go with him. Kambar follows Valmiki, and Tulasi, Adhyatma Ramayana.

(c) Special mention of Podihai Hills as the abode of Agastya on the way to Ayodhya is mentioned only by Kambar.

(d) Kambar and both the source epics state about the desire of Sita to take with thtm hte Vanara-women to Ayodhya. This is not mentioned by Tulasidas.

(e) In Kambar, Rama, while asking Hanuman to go and convey the news to Bharata, gives him his ring as an insignia. He does not ask him to meet Guha, but Hanuman of his own accord informs him also on his way. In Tulasi, Rama asks Hanuman to go in the form of a brahmin and inform Guha and Bharata. He is not said to have given any ring. In Valmiki, Rama asks Hanuman to go in the form of a man to both and gives no ring. In Adhyatma too, Rama's words are a replica of Valmiki's. Thus in Kambar alone Hanuman is sent with the ring; in Tulasi in the form of a brahmin.

(f) Only in Kambar, Bharata gets ready to burn himself at the time of Hanuman's arrival. Kambar makes use of this occasion to bring out Bharata's sacrifice, Kaushalya's concern for him, and Hanuman's and Shatrughna's unselfishness.

(g) The noiselessness at the hermitage of Bharadwaja when Bharata approaches is explained only in Kambar.

(h) Guha's arrival at the hermitage of Bharadwaja and his sorrow for not having had the fortune to serve Rama in the forests are stated only in Kambar.

(i) Vibhishana throwing down dresses and precious stones from the sky and the monkeys biting the stones and throwing them as tasteless are stated only in Tulasidas.

(j) Only Tulasi brings the end of Yuddha Kanda (Lanka kanda) soon after Guha meets Rama in this scene.

(k) Only in Tulasi, Rama goes straight to Ayodhya and not to Nandigram. Also he first goes to Kaikeyi's house and then to his own.

(l) Only in Tulasi, Rama assumes as many forms as there are people and meets them all simultaneously.

(m) Only in Tulasi, Rama introduces those who had accompanied him, as dearer to him than Bharata himself.

(n) In Kambar and Tulasi, Bharata is not depicted as having sandals on his head while meeting Rama as in Valmiki and Adhyatma.

(o) Only in Adhyatma, Bharata presents Hanuman 'a lakh of cows, hundred rich villages and sixteen well decorated very beautiful girls' for bringing happy tidings.

(p) In Valmiki and Adhyatma Ramayanas, Bharata takes Sugriva as his fifth brother. In Kambar, at Kishkindha itself Rama treats him as his sixth brother, with Guha as the fifth and later Vibhishana as the seventh. Tulasi makes no mention of this brotherhood.

16. *Rama's Coronation* :

Kambar : Rama has his hair which had turned into hard tufts, cut and after bath dresses himself richly defeating those of even gods, goes to Ayodhya in a special chariot, served by his brothers, and followed by Vibhishana and the monkey leaders, when several kings stand bowing to Rama. Sita goes in a specially decorated chariot with the Vanara women. Gods and sages rain flowers. Rama shows his reverences to his mothers and reaches his palace to the great pleasure of the citizens of Ayodhya. Those ladies who had remained celibate during the period of exile of Rama, decorate themselves with ornaments.[575] Goddesses and women of Ayodhya come so close in the crowd that they get suffocated with their different fragrances. On Rama's direction, Bharata shows the chief palace to Vibhishana and he is astonished at its

575. 'Kamba Ramayamanam' (6-38-14).

architecture. They then see other palaces. Sugriva enquires Bharata as to why the exact day of Rama's coronaion is not announced,[576] and gets the reply that it is due to the delay in bringing holy waters. He then just looks at Hanuman to bring the same and Hanuman leaves immediately.[577] On Bharata's asking, Vashishtha fixes the very next day for the coronation of Rama, and sends information to all including gods and kings. All attend the function at Ayodhya. Vashishtha arranges all preliminaries. Under Rama's orders, Mai the chief architect of gods erects the coronation pandal. Hanuman brings sacred waters. Kings carry water of the River Saryu in gold vessels. Rama and Sita are seated in a marble throne. Gods, men, women, Sugriva and others take part in the function. The necessaries required for coronation are all ready. The coronation takes place amidst joy—Hanuman supports the throne, Angada holds the royal sword, Bharata keeps the silver umbrella, while Lakshmana and Shatrughna fan silvery 'chamaras', Guru Vashishtha puts on the head of Rama the crown handed over by the fore-fathers of Sadayappa (the benefactor of Kambar) who is the king of Tiruvennainallur which is blessed with the residence of Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth.[578] Thus Rama's coronation takes place. Rama with Sita is seated on the throne surrounded by gods and others. All the three worlds are immersed in great joy. Bharata is crowned as prince.[579] Guha comes with his army and bows before Rama. Rama affectionately asks him to stay at Ayodhya. Two months pass away in pleasure. Rama gives presents in abundance to the guests and sees them off. He offers special presents to Sugriva, Angada, Hanuman, Jambavan, Nala, Neela and sixty-six crores of monkeys and sends them to Kishkindha. Sita gives a garland of pearl to Hanuman.[580] Rama gives valuables and armies as presents to Vibhishana. Guha is suitably rewarded. All go round the four brothers, the three mothers and Vashishtha in reverence and leave for their respective places. Vibhishana gives a lift to Guha, Sugriva and their people and drops them in their respective places,

576. *Ibid.*, (6-38-21).
577. *Ibid.* (6-38-22).
578. *Ibid.*, (6-38-38).
579. *Ibid.*, (6-38-42).
580. *Ibid.*, (6-39-22).

and reaches Lanka.[581] Rama rules the country with his brothers with pleasure to all and pain to none. At the end the poet gives the Phalashruti (Award for hearing) of Kambaramayanam. This brings the end of Yuddha Kanda and Kamba Ramayanam.

Tulasi: Guru Vashishtha calls for brahmins and states that the good day and time for the coronation of Rama are come. All appreciate this and want that no time should be lost. Vashishtha has it proclaimed and the whole city of Ayodhya is superbly decorated. Rama gives orders for the bath of his friends first. Then he opens his bound tuft with his own hands and calls Bharata and the other brothers to have their bath. Then Rama has his bath. All are decorated with superb ornaments and defeat the beauty of crores of cupids, to the happiness of their mothers and all. Brahma, Shiva and sages come to see Rama. He offers them heavenly seats. Vashishtha gets the throne and seats Rama and Sita amidst the recitation of sacred hymns.[582] Vashishtha is the first to put the sacred mark on Rama's fore-head and then others follow; Mothers are filled with immense joy. Rama gives charities and presents. The gods, Vedas and all sing the unique glory of Lord Rama, bless him and return to their abodes. All at Ayodhya live a life of enjoyment and peace with all comforts in plentiful measures. Six months pass in merriment without being noticed.[583] Rama calls now for all his friends, seats them near and says :

> "Very great is the service you have done me; how can I praise you to your faces? For my sake you left your houses and every comfort; therefore you are most dear to me. My brother, my life, my home, my kins-folk and my friends—all these are dear to me, but you are dearer still. I speak, as I always speak, in all sincerity. All love their servants—this is the common rule—but I feel a special affection for those who do me service. Now, comrades, all go to your homes and worship me with constancy; and utterly devote yourselves to me as always present everywhere and friend of every creature."[584]

581. *Ibid.*. (6-39-35).
582. Ram Charit Manas (7-27-1, 2)
583. *Ibid.*, (7-34).
584. *Ibid.*, (7-35-2 to 7-35).

All get entranced to hear these words. Rama then offers extraordinary jewels and garments to Sugriva and Vibhishana through the hands of Bharata and Lakshmana respectively. Seeing Angada immersed in devotion, Rama does not call him.[585] He gives presents to Jambavan, Nala and all others. After bowing to Rama all leave for their places. Now Angada rises and appeals with folded hands:

> "In the hour of death, Lord, Vali entrusted me to your protection. Wherefore, O friend of those who worship you. remembering your role as refuge of the helpless, forsake me not! You are my Lord, my Guru, my father and my mother; whither shall I go if I leave your lotus feet? Consider, O King, and tell me what can I do at home, if I part from my Lord? Shelter me then, O Lord, for I am but a child and have no wisdom, understanding or strength; shelter your humble servant! I am ready to do all the most menial housework if only I may gaze upon your lotus feet and so pass over the sea of birth and death."[586]

So saying he clasps the feet of Rama crying, 'Command me not now, O Lord, to return to my home! "

Compassionate Rama lifts him up and decorates him with the remaining jewels and his own garland and consoles him. He bids him also farewell. Angada with a broken heart leaves off repeatedly looking back at Rama expecting to be called, but seeing the will of the Lord he goes off. Hanuman requests Sugriva holding his feet to permit him to stay for ten days. The prayer is granted.[587] All leave the place excluding Hanuman. Angada requests him to remember him to the Lord repeatedly. Then Rama calls for Guha and tells him that he is a brother of him like Bharata,[588] and offers him very valuable presents of ornaments and dresses. Guha with the feet of the Lord in heart, returns back to Sringaverpur. The regime of Rama begins with all happiness, pleasures and comforts and with no pain whatsoever to anybody.

585. *Ibid.*, (7-46-4).
586. *Ibid.*. (7-38-1 to 4).
587. *Ibid*. (7-40-4, 5)
588. *Ibid.*, (7-43-2).

After a certain period Sita gives birth to two sons, and they are named as Lava and Kusha. The other three brothers also get two sons each.[589]

The poet then describes the qualities of the good and the bad people, and offers a sermon to the people according to his own sociological concepts in the form of 'Rama Gita'. Then certain incidents in the story of Garuda and Kakabhushundi sage is related followed by the chief traits of Kaliyuga, the present time. The comparative merits of Gyan (Knowledge) and Bhakti (devotion) are described followed by the answers of Kakabhushundi to the seven questions put by Garuda. Tulasi Ramayan ends with a prayer of the poet and Phalashruti (Reward for hearing).

In Valmiki, Bharata requests Rama to take back the responsibility of the kingdom which was got for him by his mother. Rama accepts his request. At first Bharata has his bath, then Lakshmana followed by Sugriva and then Vibhishana. Last of all Rama cleans his bound tuft of hair and takes his bath. All get dressed with special decorations to Rama, Sita and Lakshmana. Rama gets into a special chariot driven by Sumantra, and goes to see the city of Ayodhya with brothers and Vibhishana, Sugriva, etc. The whole city brims in pleasure, mirth and joy with decorations. Rama goes to the palace of his father at first with Sugriva, etc., and then goes to the mothers and bows before them. Jambavan, Hanuman, Vegadarshi and Rishabha fly and bring sacred waters. All things and arrangements get ready for coronation. Vashishtha seats Rama and Sita on the diamond decked throne, and the function of enthroning Rama takes place in all grandeur. The crown of their race is put by Vashishtha on the head of Rama followed by other functions. Rama and Sita then offer charities and presents. After receiving suitable presents, Vibhishana, Sugriva, Hanuman, Jambavan and other important monkeys return home. Hanuman receives a garland from Sita. Rama asks Lakshmana to become the heir-apparent, but Lakshmana rejects the same and Bharata is thus crowned. All live happily and in plenty. Rama celebrates ten Ashwamedha Yaga (Horse sacrifice) in ten thousand years with great charities.[590] This brings us to the end of Lanka Kanda. Uttarakanda follows.

589. *Ibid.*, (7-48-3, 4).
590. Valmiki Ramayana (6-130).

Adhyatma Ramayana also has the same development as Valmiki Ramayana. Bharata, Kaikeyi, and Guru Vashishtha request Rama to take back the kingdom from him and Rama accepts the same. An expert barber is sent for by Shatrughna and all arrangements are made for enthronement of Rama.[591] Bharata has his bath first followed by Lakshmana and then Sugriva and Vibhishana. After getting the bound tuft out, Rama has his bath and all get dressed. Sita is specially dressed. Kaushalya gets all the Vanara women decorated. Rama with all the brothers and friends goes round the city in the chariot brought by Sumantra on the orders of Shatrughna. Bharata drives the chariot. Monkeys in human forms ride on elephants and all go round the city with music to the happiness of all the citizens. Rama goes first into the palace of his father and then to his mothers. Rama asks Bharata to give his own palace to Sugriva and suitable palaces to others.[592] Jambavan, Hanuman, Angada and Sushena are sent to bring holy waters in gold vessels. All arrangements are made ready. Vashishtha seats Rama and Sita in the Diamond throne and performs the coronation with Valmiki and other sages. All the ceremonials are gone through. Presents and charities in abundance are distributed. Gods and sages sing the glory of Rama. Later Rama presents a garland of diamonds to Sugriva and two arm-tips to Angada. Rama then gives an invaluable diamond shining like crores of moons and a diamond bedecked garland to Sita. Sita with the implied consent of Rama gives the same garland to Hanuman standing before them with folded hands. Rama asks him to have any boon, and Hanuman requests him to grant him long life on earth till his name 'Rama' remains so that he may go on repeating his name and the same is granted by Rama.[593] Sita also blesses him with eternal salvation and all the pleasures of a Jeevanmukta. Hanuman with tears of joy goes to the Himalayas for penance.[594] Rama sends off all his friends with adequate presents. Guha, Vibhishana, Sugriva and all monkeys return to their homes. Rama carries on his regime to the happiness of all his people. The place of crowned-prince is offered by Rama to Lakshmana in spite of his disinclination to accept it.[595] Rama rules for a period

591. Adhyatma Ramavana (6-15-9).
592. *Ibid.*, (6-15-31, 32)
593. *Ibid.*, (6-15-39).
594. *Ibid.*, (6-16-13, 14).
595. *Ibid.*, (6-16-17).

of ten thousand years. At the end of the epic there is a teaching of Shiva to Parvati that Rama is the supreme God Himself, by pleasing whom the four Purusharthas, i.e., Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha can be achieved,[596] and that the name 'Rama' is the sacred idol of Vishnu.[597] This brings the end of Yuddha kanda and follows Uttara Kanda.

* * * * *

On a comparative study of this scene the following salient features are noticed :

(a) Only in Kambar, Sugriva ascertains the reason for not announcing the coronation date as being due to the delay in getting the sacred waters and looks at Hanuman who flies and brings the sacred waters in no time.

(b) Only Kambar mentions the holding of the sword of Rama by Angada and a fore-father of Sadayappa handing over the crown to Vashishtha.

(c) The crowning ceremony is described only in Kambar and Valmiki. In the other two, the enthroning of Rama alone with the sacred marks put by Vashishtha and others, is described and not the crowning ceremony.

(d) In Kambar and Tulasi, Bharata is made the heir-apparent as in Valmiki whereas in Adhyatma, Lakshmana is so crowned in spite of his protest.

(e) At Ayodhya, all the friends of Rama stay for a period of two months in Kambar but in Tulasidas six months. The source epics do not mention any such time.

(f) Kambar alone states that Vibhishana gives a lift to Guha, Sugriva, etc., and drops them at their places on his way to Lanka.

(g) Only Tulasidas mentions the extreme devotion of Angada towards Rama as lord, guru, father and mother and his

596. *Ibid.*, (6-16-26).
597. *Ibid.*, (6-16-45).

appeal for permission to stay at Ayodhya itself as his father had entrusted him to the care of Rama at the time of his death. However Rama persuades him to return.

(h) Only in Tulasi, Hänuman is permitted to stay with Rama for ten days more with permission of his king Sugriva.

(i) Only in Tulasi, to Rama two sons Lava and Kusha are born at Ayodhya itself and to all his brothers also two sons each.

Summary :

Ramayana is the national epic of India written originally in its present complete form by Valmiki 'The Adi Kavi' in the pre-Christian period in Sanskrit. Kamba Ramayanam and Tulasi Ramayan are free adaptations of the same in Tamil and Avadhi languages respectively. Kambar has been adjudged by his contemporaries as 'The Emperor of the Realms of Poesy—a title which every succeeding generation in the Tamil country has been but confirming ever since'.[598] Of Tulasidas, V. A. Smith, the famous historian, says:

> "Yet that Hindu—the tallest tree in the magic garden of mediaeval Hindu Poesy—was he greatest man of his age in India—greater even than Akbar himself."[599]

Such a great work at the hands of such great master poets has gained immortal forms with a variety of facets, both following the same, but different in outlook, treatment and expression of matter and manner according to their respective surroundings — language, people and culture.

This chapter which is the kernel of the study, gives the whole story Kanda by Kanda and scene after scene, comparng the salient features of the two master poets with the back ground of Valmiki Ramayana and Adhyatma Ramayana wherever considered necessary. It is not the trend of the story alone but also the treatment of the situations, the characteristic features of persons and places concerned, together with the magnitude of the picturisation

598. 'Kamba Ramayanam — A Study' — V. V. S. Aiyar, p. 4.
599 'Akbar, The Great Moghul' — V. A. Smith, 2nd Edn., p. 417.

have been critically analysed and factual references furnished. After a summary of the scene as found in Kambar and Tulasi, a gist of the scene as found in Valmiki and Adhyatma Ramayanas has been generally given in all situations of importance, thereby clarifying the uniqueness of the trends of Kambar and Tulasi. Then follow the comparative study and the conclusions for every important picture contained in the scenes analysing the similarities between and deviations of Kamba Ramayanam and Tulasi Ramayan from their major source works, viz. Valmiki and Adhyatma Ramayanas.

This leads to the conclusion that Kambar was a Poet first and a Devotee next whereas Tulasi was a Devotee first and a Poet next. In short Kambar was a 'kavi-bhakta' and Tulasi a 'bhakta-kavi'.

CHAPTER—V

CHARACTERS

"From the peasant in the field" says Jawahar Lal Nehru, "and the worker in the factory to the highbrow and the scholar, the story of Rama and Sita has been a living one. * * * Valmiki wrote his immortal epic and in later days, Tulasidas, writing in homely language, made this story a part of the texture of the lives of our people. A story and a book which has had this powerful influence on millions of people, during some millennia of our changing history, must have peculiar virtue in it."[1]

The Ramayanas of Valmiki, Kambar and Tulasidas are the most outstanding classics in Sanskrit, Tamil and Avadhi respectively and are a few of the noblest of all literary treasures. Their 'immortal influence on millions of peoples during some millennia of our changing history' is due not only to the story and the incidents, but to the characters who range from the God-incarnate to the lowest of the low, comprising of all types of human qualities which go to give form to varieties of personalities.

1. 'Fore-word to First Edition' to 'Valmiki Ramayana' — N. Chandrasekhara Aiyar.

"In the delineation of character" says V. V. S. Iyer. "Kamban stands on a level with the greatest poets of the world. The lines are drawn with a firm hand, and the characters are painted with such accuracy and fullness that from any single sentence, and sometimes even from a single phrase in a speech, one can tell the person speaking without any the least doubt. * * *. Naturally Valmiki has set the stamp on the characters of the Ramayana but in Kamban's hand, they have become much more grand. The student of Valmiki will wonder how his Rama and Bharata, Ravana and Kumbhakarna, Vali and Hanuman, Sita and Kausalya and the rest could be improved. The fact, however, is there that Kamban's heroes and heroines are beings of a decidedly higher stature than those of Valmiki."[2]

Reflecting the same view, Prof. S. Vaiyapuri Pillai states, "Kamban was no mere imitator of Valmiki. The plot is conceived anew in the light of changed ideals. The characters in the story are drawn with a power and inwardness rarely equalled. His poetic vision is so powerful that he seizes the very soul of a situation and makes his characters live through action and dialogue."[3]

The characteristic change brought in by Kambar is the deification of Rama and Sita, the hero and the heroine of the epic. Valmiki has treated Rama and Sita generally as human beings. In his 'Ramayana', C. Rajagopalachari states, "In Vaalmeeki's work Raama is portrayed as a great and unique man, not as an incarnation of God. True, in some chapters there are references to him as an Avataar of God, but in the body of the narrative the Raama pictured by Sage Vaalmeeki is not God himself but a great prince endowed with divine qualities. Even during Vaalmeeki's days, the idea was prevalent, to some extent, that Raama was an Avataar. Centuries later Kamban and Tulasidaas sang the Raamaayana, and by that time it had come to be accepted that Sri Raama was an Avataar of Vishnu. Raama and Krishna were synonyms for Vishnu; and Vishnu in turn, meant Raama or Krishna. Temples had come into existence with ritual worship of Raama as God. In a situation like that, how could the later

2. 'Kamba Ramayanam - A Study' — V. V. S. Aiyar, p. 46.
3. 'Kamban Kaviyam' — Prof. S. Vaiyapuri Pillai, p. 153.

poets portray Raama as a mere hero? Any such attempt would have failed. Kamban and Tulasidaas were devotees of the highest order."[4]

Thus Kambar portrays his hero as the supreme God-incarnate. The remarkable feature in Kambar, however, is that whereas most of the characters look at Rama as God-incarnate, he himself is depicted as being unaware of this. On the other hand the Rama of Tulasidas knows that he is God Vishnu and generally acts accordingly. He even tells Sita at Panchavati the purport of their incarnations and asks her to substitute herself by an illusion (Maya Sita). Tulasi is more religious than literary, whereas Kambar is more literary than religious. About the former Dr. George Grierson writes:

> "I give much less than the usual estimates when I say that fully ninety millions of people base their theories of moral and religious conduct upon his (Tulasidas's) writings. If we take the influence exercised by him at the present time as our test, he is one of the three or four great writers of Asia. * * Over the whole Gangetic Valley his great work is better known than the Bible is in England."[5]

Expressing the same view, Dr. Shambhunath Singh says:

> "The respect accorded to Tulasi Ramayana is more as a religious work than as an epic."[6]

Both in Kambar and Tulasi, Rama is the incarnation of Vishnu, one of the Trimoorties (Trio) and is raised as 'God the Absolute' who transforms himself into the 'Trio'. Rama thus becomes the supreme God Himself, who as a human being, deliberately subjects himself to all mundane pleasures and pains.

4. 'Ramayana — C. Rajagopalachari (Bhavan's Book University Series No. 44) p. 1.
5. 'Encyclopeadia of Religions and Ethics' — Dr. George Grierson (1921 Edition) p. 471.
6. Hindi Mahakavya Ka Swaroop Vikas' — Dr. Shamboo Nath Singh, p. 481-482.

With this back-ground both the poets have delineated the major and minor characters so as to suit the genius of the respective personalities, always keeping in view the object of the incarnation. The characterisation, in general, runs on similar lines in both the epics. "Valmiki" says Grierson, "praised Bharata's sense of duty, Lachhman's brotherly affection and Sita's wifely devotion, but Tulasi taught them as an example."[7] This is true of Kambar as well, and in a greater measure.

A special feature of Kambar is colossalisation of the forms, powers, qualities and actions of the characters; for example, if Tulasidas states in but one line of a chaupayi, "By adopting various efforts, Ravana got Kumbhakarna awakened."[8] Kambar has described this in fifteen stanzas in order to show the depth of Kumbakarna's slumber and his huge form. He says that the trotting of horses over him had no effect on him and that finally lances had to be used by one thousand warriors.[9] So also about Shiva's bow which was broken by Rama. Such hyperbolic statements are found in plenty in Kambar. We have them in Tulasi also. The extraordinary strength exhibited by Rama on the occasion of breaking the bow is described in similar lines by both the poets. According to Kambar, the bow was carried by sixty thousand stalwarts and—" People saw Rama take the bow and instantaneously heard its breaking sound."[10] Tulasidas says that the bow which had baffled even Ravana who had lifted Shiva's mountain itself,[11] was nothing of a job for Rama. " All stood watching, but none could see him grasp it, raise it and draw it tight. In that moment Rama broke the bow in half, and the dread, harsh crash resounded through the worlds."[12]

It may also be stated that Kambar had idealised both the types of characters of the epic, namely the incarnations and non-incarnations. Rama the incarnation of the Supreme God is, so far as he himself is concerned, just a man in Kambar and thereby

7. 'The Modern Vernacular Literature of Hindustan' — Dr. George Grierson, p. 43.
8. Ram Charit Manas (6-84-3).
9. Kamba Ramayanam (6-15-55).
10. *Ibid.*, (1-12-34).
11. Ram Charit Manas (1-325-4).
12. *Ibid.*, (1-294-4).

stands for an ideal human being. In Tulasi, Rama knows that he is Vishnu incarnate and thereby gets a little too far away from human beings. The ideal, however, for a human being, should only be a man, and it should be shown as to how he thinks, feels and acts in ordinary as well as exceptional situations. In the case of non-incarnations too, we find that Kambar is consistent in keeping up the idealism in characterisation. Sugriva and Vibhishana are instances in point. Sugriva assists in getting his brother killed for his misbehaviour and characterlessness, and also Vibhishana.

Still Tulasidas states :

> "Sugriva committed the very sin for which Rama slew Vali like a hunter, and Vibhishana too was guilty of the same crime, but Rama regarded it not at all; rather Raghuvir honoured them when they met Bharat and sang their praise in the Royal court. "[13]

Kambar gives totally a different treatment to these two or rather four characters in accordance with the traditions of Tamil literature and culture. After the demise of Vali, his wife Tara lives the life of an ideal widow just as Kaushalya or Sumitra, and Sugriva treats her as a mother. Her sight makes Lakshmana think of his widowed mothers with tearful eyes.[14] Mandodari dies with Ravana[15] like the Pandya Queen Kopperundeviyar of Madurai in Silappadiharam, who dies instantaneously with her husband King Nedunchezhian. Thus the four characters Sugriva, Tata, Vibhishana and Mandodari are idealised in such a cultured manner that they become examples of chastity and righteousness.

We shall now proceed to examine the characters presented by Kambar and Tulasi.

13. *Ibid.*, (1-46-3, 4).
14. Kamba Ramayanam (4-11-51, 52).
15. *Ibid.*, (6-36-246).
16. 'Silappadiharam' (2-10-81).

1. *Rama*:

Rama is in both 'the Absolute made Personal.' In Kambar's Rama, we find an incarnation of Vishnu with all human qualities, but his acts are not 'merely a conscious exhibition of divine Lila'[17] as in Tulasi. At the very birth, Tulasi's Rama shows his divine form of Vishnu with four hands and the distinctive weapons.[18]

Kambar says that in his childhood Rama in a playful mood hits a mud ball on the hunch-back of Manthara,[19] which act later induces her to prevent the decided coronation of Rama.

On the way to the hermitage of Vishwamitra, Kambar's Rama does not shoot at Tataka immediately on hearing the words of Vishwamitra, but feels greatly hesitant to take arms against a woman. He enquires about her, and only when convinced that she deserves to be killed, he takes away her life. Tulasi's Rama shoots at her without a word of enquiry.

The pre-matrimonial love of Rama for Sita, according to Kambar, is known only to him, but Tulasi's Rama tells his brother Lakshmana about his reaction at the very hearing of the sound of her 'bracelets and anklets and the bells on her girdle' before seeing her, and later he tells Vishwamitra also.

Rama of Kambar accepts Guha, Sugriva and Vibhishana as the fifth, sixth and seventh brothers in order. This sense of brotherhood is a feature of Kambar's Rama only. Tulasi's Rama addresses Guha as only a friend and brother.[20]

In Kambar, Rama does not ask Lakshmana at Panchavati to punish Shoorpanakha, nor does he suggest to her to approach Lakshmana. In Tulasi Ramayana, Lakshmana acts only on a prompting by Rama.

17. Introduction to 'The Holy Lake of the Acts of Rama' — W.D.P. Hill, p. XXIX.
18. Ram Charit Manas (1-24-four chandas).
19. Kamba Ramayanam (2-2-41).
20. Ram Charit Manas (7-43-2).

In Kambar, Rama does not, either before the arrival of the golden deer or at any other time, show any sign of the impending calamity. In Tulasidas, Rama asks Sita to get into the fire and come out assuming an illusionary form i.e., 'Maya Sita' as the time for the play (Lila) had come.

At the end of Aranya Kanda, Narada asks Rama why he was not helped to marry Vishvamohini, the daughter of king Sheelanidhi, and Rama replies that woman in general is evil-natured and the root of all troubles. He tells Lakshmana also about the unsteady nature of the woman. Kambar's Rama never says anything derogatory of the nature of womanhood.

At Chitrakoota, and again on return from exile to Ayodhya, Tulasi's Rama plays miracles by assuming as many forms as there were people to meet, and relieving them at the same time of all their sorrow. Kambar's Rama plays no such miracle.

In the Ramayana of Tulasidas, Rama's incarnation was due not only to the prayers of the devas to rid the world of the demons and evils, but also to certain curses incurred by Vishnu himself including one by the chaste lady Vrinda the wife of Jallandar and another by Narada. In Kambar the birth of Rama is solely due to his grace and compassion on the gods and to relieve the earth from the burden of evil-doers.

2. *Bharata* :

V. V. S. Iyer, paying a tribute to the character of Bharata, says that he is 'one of the most just and tender-hearted and most touching characters known to story or history.[21] Both Kambar and Tulasidas have risen to their heights in delineating him as an embodiment of sacrifice and service. He is extremely dutiful and supremely righteous. Both Kambar and Tulasidas state that Bharata carried Sri Rama's sandals on his head which is not mentioned by Valmiki. In Kambar, Bharata is so devoted to Rama as to take a promise from him that he would be back just at the end of the fourteen years, failing which he would enter fire. It is not so in Tulasi Ramayan or even in

21. 'Kamba Ramayanam - A Study' — V. V. S. Aiyar, p. 279.

the two source epics. Actually Rama is not back at the due time and Bharata is on the verge of jumping into the fire when Hanuman comes with a message of Rama's return and extinguishes the fire.

While Tulasidas says that the only example for Bharata is Bharata himself, Kambar makes Kaushalya tell Bharata—

> "* * * Ten million million Ramas ev'n can never approach the love immaculate that burns with thy soul!"

Tulasi credits Bharata with great physical bravery and power of archery. When Hanuman was over Ayodhya on his return flight to Lanka at night with the Sanjeevi mountain (of herbs), Bharata takes him to be a demon and shoots at him a fierce shaft and brings him down.[22] Learning the true facts from Hanuman, he offers to send him with Sanjeevi mountain in no time at the tip of a fast flying shaft to the spot where Lakshmana was lying.[23] Hanuman, however flies by himself. There is no such incident in Kambar.

3. *Lakshmana:*

A characteristic feature of Lakshmana as portrayed by Tulasidas is his anger. He is also endowed with a sense of humour, whereas nowhere in Kambar does Lakshmana turn humourous. His humourous talks with Parashurama, according to Dr. Mata Prasad Gupta, does not fit in with his character.[24]

Kambar's Lakshmana is a little independent. His disfigurement of Shoorpanakha is on his own initiative and not due to any indication by Rama as in Tulasi. Again, he expresses a view to Rama against Sugriva before Vali-Sugriva fight begins.

Kambar's Lakshmana is serious and sane and is even Rama's guide on several occasions, for example when Rama gets frightened on seeing Kabandha demon, when the incident of the Golden deer comes, and where the rainy season is over at Rishyamooka, etc. But in Tulasi, Lakshmana's anger is not an uncommon feature

22. Ram Charit Manas (6-79).
23. *Ibid.*, (6-81-3).
24. 'Tulasidas' — Dr. Mata Prasad Gupta, p. 283.

and is manifested even on improper occasions like the Swayamvara of Sita in the presence of Rama, Janaka, Vishwamitra and others.

Strangely enough, there is another unusual trait in Tulasi's Lakshmana. He becomes a philosopher with a dispassionate attitude when he turns out to be a religious instructor to Guha while standing on guard for Rama and Sita at Shringaverpur.[25]

One important difference is that in Kambar, Lakshmana does not have a wink of sleep throughout the long period of exile of fourteen years.[26] But Tulasidas has indicated by suggestion that Lakshmana had slept. For example, Guha shows to Bharata the places where Sita, Rama and Lakshmana slept at Shringaverpur.[27]

4. *Shatrughna* :

The two outstanding features of Shatrughna are brotherly affection and anger. Kambar has portrayed in him sacrifice and deep insight also. When Bharata and Shatrughna return to Ayodhya after the death of Dasharatha, Kambar makes Shatrughna tell Bharata that Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth, seems to have left Ayodhya.[28]

Again, when Bharata, before entering into the fire on Rama's failure to return in time, offers the kingdom to Shatrughna, he replies :

> "Among the three brothers of Rama, one had accompanied him into the forests to reign in deserts rather than suffer his separation in the town; and now another brother has determined to end his earthly existence, as Rama had not returned by the appointed date. Should I not be ashamed in their presence to be offered the crown and kingdom ? "[29]

25. Ram Charit Manas (2-93-2) and (2-94-4).
26. Kamba Ramayanam (6-4-144).
27. Ram Charit Manas (2-199-4).
28. Kamba Ramayanam (2-6-38).
29. *Ibid.*, (6-37-223).

He adds that he will only be committing a great sin, should he enjoy the kingdom after him in this manner, and states that he also will follow him.

By the delineation of this character of Shatrughna, Kambar shows that service to a devotee is greater than service to God. Shatrughna sees Rama in Bharata.

5. *Dasharatha* :

Love and Truth are the chief traits in the character of Dasharatha of both Kambar and Tulasi. The conflict between his passionate attachment towards Rama and his strict adherence to his given word brings about his ruin. Both in Kambar and Tulasi, his desire to get Rama crowned immediately is due to his old age which he discovers from the grey hair near his ear.

A special feature in both Kambar and Tulasi is Dasharatha's appearance at the time of the 'Fire Ordeal' of Sita after Ravana's death. But according to Kambar, Dasharatha asks Rama to have any boon of his choice, and Rama asks him to accept Kaikeyi as his wife and Bharata as his son whom he had discarded on the insistance of Kaikeyi for the fulfilment of her boons.[30] Dasharatha excuses Bharata and does not agree to excuse Kaikeyi, but after Rama's appeal Dasharatha excuses Kaikeyi also.[31]

Another feature of Dasharatha detailed by Kambar alone is his luxury for which his travel to Mithila with all his consorts is sufficient proof. His affection for his wives besides the three queens, was so great that all of them die with Dasharatha in the same funeral pyre.[32]

6. *Vashishtha* :

In Kambar's Vashishtha a noteworthy trait is his farsightedness. He tells Rama that, should he really leave Ayodhya and go

30. *Ibid.*, (2-9-139).
31. *Ibid.*, (6-37-131).
32. *Ibid.*, (2-9-140).

into the forest, his father Dasharatha will surely leave the world for good.[33]

7. *Vishwamitra* :

Both Kambar and Tulasidas have portrayed the same traits. Tulasi makes mention of two extra situations showing the sage's continued interest in and sympathy for Rama. While at Mithila, he is informed of the pre-matrimonal love of Rama and Sita by Rama himself. We find Vishwamitra, according to Tulasi Ramayana, at Chitrakoota also. It is not so in Kambar.

8. *Janaka* :

In Tulasi, Janaka is a little impatient. When he finds none able even to lift Shiva's bow at the Swayamvara, he shouts in dismay that there really is no great warrior on the earth, and this infuriates Lakshmana. This is not found in Kambar.

Again, Janaka of Tulasidas evinces a greater attachment towards his daughter and son-in-law than of Kambar, in-as-much as he comes to Chitrakoota with his wife Sunayana to meet them, and, if possible, to take them back. Finding Rama not returning, he goes to Ayodhya with Bharata, sets matters right and then only goes to Mithila.

9. *Parashurama* :

In Tulasi, Parashurama appears earlier i.e., immediately after the breaking of the bow and before the marriage. Vishwamitra is present but not Dasharatha. In Kambar, Parashurama comes when all are leaving for Ayodhya after the marriage, when Dasharatha is present but not Vishwamitra.

10. *Sumantra* :

In Tulasi, Sumantra appears to be a master charioteer in-as-much-as he drives away with Rama, Sita, and Lakshmana to Shringaverpur during the night so as to evade detection from the wheel tracts by the people of Ayodhya who had followed them.

33. *Ibid.*, (2-4-166).

11. *Guha* :

In Kambar, Guha is a stranger to Rama and Lakshmana and by mistake takes Lakshmana to be Rama, but later he developes the greatest regard and respect towards Rama and feels greately honoured and blessed in having had a chance to meet him. His offering fish and honey to Rama is an act of his honest devotion. He later gives him fruits and roots after realising the situation. He takes pleasure in himself rowing the boat.

In Tulasi, he is a great devotee of Rama and knows the efficacy of 'the dust of his feet.'[34] Some scholars feel that Tulasi's Guha is not the one who rows the boat for Rama, but some other boatman 'kevat'. However, the kevat allows Rama to get into the boat only after washing his feet with water.[35]

12. *Khara-Dooshana* :

Unlike Kambar's, Tulasi's Khara-Dooshana have a sense of sympathy for and attraction towards beauty. Attracted by his beauty they send messengers to Rama to ask him to give away Sita to them and return safe though they had defaced Shoorpanakha.[36] Their strength and power of magic make the demons appear like Rama to one another and consequently they fight among themselves crying 'Rama, Rama,' and incidentally get eternal salvation.

13. *Mareecha* :

In Tulasi, Mareecha turns a devotee of Rama after his experience at Vishwamitra's ashrama. He sees through things clearly and realises that Rama is God-incarnate. He prefers death at his divine hands to that of by Ravana.[37] When he runs as a golden deer, he often turns back to have a view of the Lord and feels happy over his own great fortune.[38] While breathing his last he devoutly repeats Rama's name internally.[39] This is not found in Kambar.

34. Ram Charit Manas (2-101-2).
35. *Ibid.*, (2-102-3, 4).
36. *Ibid.*, (3-22-3).
37. *Ibid.*, (3-32-3).
38. *Ibid.*, (3-32).
39. *Ibid.*, (3-33-8).

14. *Jatayu* :

In Tulasi, Jatayu after his fight with Ravana keeps alive repeating the name of Rama. He informs Rama that Ravana went straight towards the south with Sita.[40] In Kambar, the repetition of the name of Rama is not mentioned. But his fight with Ravana is given in detail so as to bring out the great prowess of Jatayu. To console Rama he turns to the philosophy of fate and says that 'intelligence and effort can never overcome fate '.[41]

15. *Hanuman* :

The characterisation in both the epics is the same except for some minor differences. In Tulasi, Hanuman goes to Rama as a brahmin but in Kambar as a young man. In Kambar, he possesses excellence of power of speech which earns from Rama the title, 'Sollin Selvar'[42] (Master of words). Vali on the death-bed tells Rama of Hanuman's extraordinary prowess—

"* * * * If thou desire the king
O. Lanka to be brought to thee o'er here
In chains tied hand and foot, or anything
Impossible for others to attempt
Behold this Hanuman, he will fulfil
Thy every hest. Look on this hero, Lord,
—As a bow ready bent in thy out hand. "[43]

It is to be noted that this tribute comes from his master's enemy.

Tulasidas gives an instance of Hanuman's presence of mind and capacity to meet difficult situations. Sita desires to burn herself to death and asks an Ashoka tree for fire. At that psychological moment, Hanuman from a branch above, throws Rama's signet ring. In her mental condition, she takes the shining object

40. *Ibid.*, (3-38-1, 2).
41. Kamba Ramayanam (3-8-193).
42. *Ibid.*, (4-2-20).
43. *Ibid.*, (4-7-129, 130).

to be a spark of fire dropped by the tree in response to her request. When she gets clear in her mind as to what was before her, he makes his appearance and introduces himself.

16. *Sugriva :*

Kambar's Sugriva is on a higher pedastal than that of Tulasi, both in bravery and celibacy. Seeing Ravana on a tower in Lanka he jumps at him and has a severe combat with him. He returns with the precious stones of his crown.

Kambar's Tara is a chaste widow and Sugriva treats her as a mother. In Tulasi, he commits the same sin as Vali for which Rama took away his life. Expressing this trait in Sugriva, Tulasidas while singing the glory of Rama, states :

> "The very crime for which he like a huntsman killed Bali, was in turn the sin of Sugriva."[44]

17. *Vali :*

Kambar's Vali is a great devotee of Shiva. To get flowers for his worship he goes from mountain to mountain.[45] He catches hold of Rama's arrow before it could get out through his chest. He has a sharp intellect and his closely reasoned argument on the injustice of Rama's aiming at him from behind a cover disarms Rama, and Lakshmana has to find an answer for him.

Kambar's Vali has a very great sense of self-respect. He requests Rama to appeal to his three brothers not to look down upon Sugriva for having got him killed at the hand of a third person. The brother in him makes him request Rama to excuse Sugriva, should he show any weakness such as extravagance and drinking. Knowing who Rama really is, he entrusts his son Angada to him and dies only after Rama hands over his sword to Angada, and thereby ensuring his future security.

44. Ram Charit Manas (1-46-3) — Trn. from 'The Tulasi Ramayan' — by F S. Growse, p. 25.
45. Kamba Ramayanam (4-8-7). This is the statement of Tara (4-3-37, 40)— These are the statements of Hanuman to Rama.

18. *Angada* :

Tulasidas's Angada shows greater devotion to Rama than Kambar's, and does not feel like leaving him after the coronation. He reminds Rama of the last request of his father at death-bed.[46] He is, however, persuaded by Rama and ultimately he leaves but makes a special request to Hanuman to be remembering him to Rama frequently.

Another specific trait in Angada of Tulasi is his indulgence in a low type of conversation with Ravana at his very council hall.[47] This conversation brings down the personality of Angada. To show his strength he plants his foot firm on the ground challenging all present to lift it up. All including Indrajit try and get defeated. Finally Ravana himself comes to try. Now Angada says :

> "You won't be saved by grasping my foot! Why don't you go and grasp Rama's feet, you fool?[48]

So saying he takes off his leg and comes back. These objectionable traits of Angada do not find place in Kambar.

19. *Ravana* :

Dr. Mata Prasad Gupta says about Tulasidas's characterisation of Ravana :

> "It is a matter of pity that our poet has not done full justice with this brave character due to his extreme devotion to his Lord."[49]

Kambar has delineated his character so as to fit in with the greatness of Rama, for, if Rama worsted only an insignificant person, he will not be called great by reason of his victory. As also stated by Valmiki,[50] "it is only after hearing about Sita that passion for women became the predominant note of his character."[51]

46. Ram Charit Manas (4-12-Chand).
47. Tulasidas — Dr. Mata Prasad Gupta, p. 290.
48. Ram Charit Manas (6-53-1, 2).
49. 'Tulasidas' — Dr. Mata Prasad Gupta, p. 287.
50. Valmiki Ramayana (5-9).
51. 'Kamba Ramayanam - A Study' — V. V. S. Aiyar. p. 248.

In Kambar, the curse of Brahma is always in Ravana's mind and this prevents him from touching any woman without her consent.[52] While taking away Sita he takes care not to touch her person. He uproots the very ground with the cottage in which she was living at Panchavati.[53]

Ravana of Kambar is over-imaginative. Though he had not seen Sita before as in Tulasi at the swayamvara, he gets a hallucination of Sita on a mere description of her beauty by Shoorpanakha. His passion for Sita is so great that it overshadows the death of Khara-Dooshana and other demons at Janasthana and the insult caused to his own sister by the cutting away of her nose, breasts and ears. He forgets everything but Sita.[54]

Ravana's power over nature is very great in Kambar. His body begins burning as it were by the fire of lust. To cool it down he orders for the arrival of all the seasons one after another, and of the sun and the moon too according to his own sweet will. Finding no relief, he asks all of them to get away and commands for complete darkness to prevail wherein he sees only an image of Sita.

Ravana's pride, vanity, confidence in his personal might and love of glory are as great as his lust, and blinds his sense of security for his own son, brother, and even wife. Exasperated at Indrajit advising him to return Sita and purchase peace, Ravana says :

"* * * * Think not, I counted on
The rakshasas who are already fallen :
Think not that I did count on those who're yet
Alive : think not I hoped that thou wouldst beat
My foes upon the field; in my sole right arm
I placed my trust, and I provoked this war!"[55]

52. Kamba Ramayanam (5-6-21).
53. *Ibid.*, (3-8-74).
54. *Ibid.*, (3-7-83).
55. *Ibid.*, (6-27-8). Same sentiment is expressed by Tulasi's Ravana too to his selected warriors (6-101-3).

In his anxiety to prolong the fight to the last, he expounds the value of glory, and the philosophy of the impermanance of life comes in handy:

"* * * * * * This life,
Transient as the bubble in the stream.
I may e'en in the sight of beaten gods
Forfeit upon the field, for thou 't will shine
With glory's halo that will never dim:
But her, Can I renounce, I twenty-armed?"[56]

and then,

"* * * * We live to-day,
Tomorrow finds us not, but glory, doth
It ever die?[57]

His sense of prestige is apparent when he continues:

"* * * * * Die, I may;
But can I stoop to shame and littleness
E'en I who am the terror of the heavens
And earth? What more thou mayest go to thy home
And, from thy chest the infinite barbs removed,
Lay down upon thy bed and sleep in peace!"[58]

So saying he orders forth for his battle-car. Such are his pride and passion, the height of which is not reached in Tulasi.

In Kambar, Ravana's appreciation of Sita's beauty, on seeing her at Panchavati is such that he regrets:

" What a pity, I have not a thousand unwinking eyes?", and at Ashoka garden, he reminds her of her youth which she could not afford to waste:

"O Sita, life and youth are transient,
Thou canst not youth enjoy for long; if all
Thy days of youth are wasted thus, when dost

56. *Ibid.*, (6-27-9).
57. *Ibid.*, (6-27-10).
58. *Ibid.*, (6-27-11, 12).

Thou hope to reap the fruits of life? 'Tis not
For me, I grieve: I shall die willingly,
If that's thy wish; but if thy heart is turned
To bitterness, show me another one
Beside thyself for charm that never cloys,
And love and beauty's perfect shape."[59]

He even sacrifices his pride and prestige, and begs her to accept him as her 'slave who rules the triple worlds without a rival or a peer!'. He finally prostrates at the feet raising his twenty hands above his ten heads![60]

This level of appreciation of her beauty does not appear in Tulasi's Ravana.

His brotherly love is also conspicuous. In Kambar, Ravana and Kumbhakarna are said to be:

"Though two their bodies, their life was only one", and that from their very childhood they lived like inseparables. When Kumbhakarna dies, Ravana laments:

"* * * * Now that thou art dead, my brother,
I do not care to live. I cannot live
Alone, nor shall I let thee go alone:—
I come, my elephant proud, I come, I come!"[61]

In Tulasi also, Ravana weeps bitterly and embraces the head again and again.[62]

The effect of Indrajit's death on Ravana as shown in both the epics may be stated here. In Kambar, when Ravana hears the news, 'his eyes flash fire, and he draws his sword and with one sweep he beheads the massengers who bring the news'[63], and

59. *Ibid.*, (5-4-31, 32).
60. *Ibid*, (5-4-37).
61. *Ibid.*, (6-16-86).
62. Ram Charit Manas (6-94-2).
63. Kamba Ramayanam (6-28-5).

weeps with extreme sorrow and anger, whereas in Tulasi, Ravana immediately falls unconscious[64] and a little later begins to console Mandodari and all other ladies explaining the ephemeral nature of the world.[65] After Indrajit's death, Kambar's Ravana is seized with fear,[66] while Tulasi's Ravana is not.

Certain other traits are found in the character of Ravana of Tulasidas. When a challenge is thrown, Ravana does not care for his prestige. When Angada throws a challenge in Ravana's council hall to lift his fixed leg and all others are baffled, Ravana himself proceeds to meet the challenge. Angada does not permit him to do so. He asks him to go and hold the feet of Rama.[67] Ravana indulges in undignified talk with Angada. Earlier, when Vibhishana sincerely tries to advise him, Ravana behaves in an ungentlemanly and unbrotherly manner[68] and kicks over his chest.[69]

Tulasidas's Ravana knows Rama as Vishnu-incarnate, and feels like dying at his hands and attaining eternal salvation. Hidden devotion to Rama and Sita is a special trait in the character of Tulasi's Ravana. He knows it to be impossible in his case to attain 'Mukti' (salvation) by following the path of 'Bhakti' (Devotion).[70] When Sita is repulsive on seeing his real form at Panchavati, he feels ashamed but is also happy internally, and mentally bows at her feet.[71]

20. *Vibhishana* :

According to Kambar before meeting Rama, Vibhishana is just a good and righteous person but in Tulasi he has been a devotee of Rama even before. When searching for Sita, Hanuman is surprised to see in Vibhishana's house a temple of Vishnu with

64. Ram Charit Manas (6-100-3).
65. *Ibid.*, (6-100).
66. Kamba Ramayanam (6-28-19).
67. Ram Charit Manas (6-53-1, 2).
68. *Ibid.*, (5-42-3).
69. 'Hindi Navaratna'—Mishrabandhu, p. 149.
70. Ram Charit Manas (3-29-1, 2, 3).
71. *Ibid.*, (3-34-8).

the 'tulasi', plant and the ensigns of conch and wheel. Just then Vibhishana gets up from sleep repeating the name of Rama. Hanuman is extremely pleased and meets him in the form of a brahmin. Both have a heart-to-heart conversation. Vibhishana tells him that his life is like the tongue between the teeth and informs him all about 'Mother Sita' and the place in Ashoka Garden where she is kept by Ravana.[72] This is not found in Kambar.

In Tulasi when Ravana kicks him on the chest, Vibhishana holds his feet saying that he is like a father to him and still advises him to take to the worship of Rama.[73] Still strangely enough, after Ravana's death, Tulasi's Vibhishana takes Mandodari as his concubine.[74] Kambar's Vibhishana does not possess any such evil trait and Mandodari dies with Ravana in the battle-field itself. A noteworthy feature of Kambar's Vibhishana is his appeal to Kumbhakarna to join Rama and receive the crown already promised to him.[75] This shows his extreme righteousness.

21. *Kumbhakarna* :

" The mighty Rakshasa " says V. V. S. Iyer, " has become in the hands of Kamban a seer and a Bhakta, a tender-hearted brother and a stern pursuer of duty. He reminds us of Bhishma and Karna in Indian story, and Hector of the Homeric Epic."[76] Tulasidas has only depicted him in general as 'a little more than a sleepy gluttonous giant'. Kambar's Kumbhakarna justifies and even supports the action taken by Vibhishana who says :

> "For crime of one, shall we that know no guilt
> Ruin ourselves by fighting on his side

72. *Ibid.*, (5-5-4 to 5-8-3).
73. *Ibid.*, (5-42-4).
74. *Ibid.*, (1-46-4).
75. Kamba Ramayanam (6-15-150).
76. 'Kamba Ramayanam - A Study' — V. V. S. Aiyar, p. 151.

And holy Parashuram, did he not kill
His very mother for her sin? Ev'n Shiv
Cut off great Brahma's head when he from right
Did swerve: thou'rt wise learn though upon them."[77]

But he chooses to be with Ravana and die in the war:

"I'm a sinner born, and Fate is just
That dooms me to death."

Kumbhakarna's appeal to Rama at the time of his death reveals his brotherly affection towards Vibhishana. He requests Rama to have Vibhishana always under his care, and appeals:

"Though he is Rakshas born, his heart knows not
Th' iniquity of Rakshas birth. He has
Now come to thee who are the Ancient one
Disguised in princely weeds: I pray thee once
Again, protect him first and last."[78]

Kambar and Tulasi have both depicted Kumbhakarna's devotion to Rama but Kambar's is one with extreme 'affection and tenderness' to Vibhishana who had joined the camp of the enemy. To a certain extent Tulasi's Kumbhakarna also has this affection, and congratulates Vibhishana for his stand, asking him to worship Rama 'the ocean of beahty and happiness.'[79] After the death of Kumbhakarna, his spirit enters Rama's body according to Tulasidas.

22. *Indrajit*:

We find Indrajit as 'a perfection of valourous qualities' in both the epics. Kambar's Indrajit exhausts all his magical powers in his attempt to defeat the enemy. He creates an illusionary Sita, cuts it before Hanuman and bewilders the entire enemy camu.

Tulasi's Indrajit is shown to be weaker than Angada as already referred to.[80]

77. Kamba Ramayanam (6-15-144, 145).
78. *Ibid.*, (6-15-357).
79. Ram Charit Manas (6-86-4. 5).
80. *Ibid.*, (6-52-6).

23. *Sita*:

Tulasi's Sita, like Rama,[81] knows her being an incarnation and the purpose for the same. On the arrival of guests from Ayodhya for the marriage at Mithila, Tulasidās says:

> "She manifested to some extent her own great power. By means of inner contemplation she summoned all the supernatural spirits and sent them to attend the king. At Sita's bidding all the spirits repaired to the guest chamber with every rich celestial luxury to bring the king delight. Each wedding guest found his own chamber furnished with every kind of heavenly delight, but no one guessed at all the secret source of power, but all were loud in praise of Janaka. Yet Raghunayak knew it for Sita's power and rejoiced when he realised her loving care."[82]

Again, just before the arrival of the golden deer, Tulasi's Rama in the absence of Lakshmana asks Sita to assume an illusionary form of 'Maya Sita', and she does so by entering into fire.[83] She continues in this illusionary form till the Fire Ordeal after Ravana's death.

Sita is held to be 'that unparalled heroine of all literature whose name is a synonym for all the virtues of women in any land and of any time.'[84] This can be said of her character throughout, only if Sita continues to remain Sita from the beginning to the end. She remains so in Kambar as in Valmiki, but in Tulasi, she, of her own accord on the words of Rama, disappears, entering fire at Panchavati and a counterfiet 'Maya Sita' functions till the end of the Fire Ordeal at Lanka. Regarding 'Maya Sita', the Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri says:

> "But it deprives the Epic of all interest. We cannot be interested seriously in the adventures of a mere Maya Sita. I think it is very difficult for us to persuade

81. 'Leaves from Kamban' — Prof. A. Srinivasa Raghavan, p. (vii) in Introduction.
82. Ram Charit Manas (1-339-4 to 1-340-2).
83 *Ibid.*, (3-30-2).
84. 'Lectures on the Ramayana'—The Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, p. 3.

ourselves that when Rama and Lakshmana bemoan their separation from Sita, when they threaten Sugriva with death for not carrying out his promise to search for Sita, and when subsequently, not finding her, they weep and weep, all the time it is only Maya Sita that they are bothering about. I think it is extraordinary that any people should believe that the Sita of the greater part of the tragedy was a counterfeit Sita and should still interest themselves deeply in her fortune, elated when she rejoices and grieved when she suffers. That, I think, is an impossible position. I, therefore, discard the Maya Sita story as entirely unfounded, and calculated to take away our interest in the whole of this drama.''[85]

Here it must be noted that Tulasi does not implicitely follow Adhyatma Ramayana in the depiction of Maya Sita here. In Adhyatma it is the god of Agni who replaces Sita by a counterfeit Maya Sita, whereas in Tulasi, it is Sita herself who changes her external only into a Maya form, thereby the internal Sita being the same.

Now, we find that the Pre-matrimonial Sita of Kambar differs from Tulasi's. Kambar's Sita falls in love with Rama at first sight from her balcony, when he was passing by her palace:

"So stood that maiden of rare loveliness
And eye caught eye and each the other ate;
As quiet they stood, minds into one were fused
The hero looked at her and Sita looked at him.''[86]

And then—

"Each with a look,
Chained the other's heart and drew it on
Till the hero of the bow, supreme among men,
And the maid with eyes like the sword,

85. *Ibid.*, p. 165-166.

86. Kamba Ramayanam (1-10-35).

In a wonderous exchange found
Each one's heart filled with the other."[87]

She regrets that she did not immediately embrace him. She suffers for long the pangs of love before she sees him at the marriage ceremony. In Tulasi her love starts in the Mithila garden on hearing the words of a maid-in-confidence who gets infatuated at Rama's beauty. Sita is anxious to see him. She goes with her maiden friends to the spot and looks at the princes, herself remaining unseen:

> "Her eyes, on beholding their beauty, were filled with longing and with the gladness of one who has found a long-lost treasure. Wearied with gazing upon Rama's charms, her eyelids forgot to wink, (The poet says that Nimi who had got the boon of resting on the eyelids of all people, left his place feeling shy, suggesting thereby that the eyelids of both stopped winking, and eyes were left wide open!) and her whole frame was fulfilled with desire, as is the partridge when it sees the autumnal moon. Receiving Rama into her heart by the pathway of vision, she craftily closed upon him the doors of her eyelids. When her companions saw her thus overcome, they were too much abashed to utter a word."[88]

She later looks on his graceful form from head to foot. Now she remembers her father's vow on one side and also mother's anger on the other regarding her delay. So, before returning:

> "Pretending to look back at a deer or a bird or a tree, she turned again and again, and as each time she beheld the beauty of Raghubir, her love grew ever greater."[89]

Coming next to the marriage, we find a very subtle feeling of devotion in Tulasi's Sita. She hesitates to touch Rama's feet at the marriage having heard of the story of Ahalya. The poet says:

87. Ibid., (1-10-36)—Trn. by Prof. A. Srinivasa Raghavan—'Leaves from Kamban', p. 13.
88. Ram Charit Manas (1-265-2, 3, 4)—Trn. by F. S. Growse.
89. *Ibid*., (1-267)—Trn. by W. D. P. Hill.

"She was afraid and would not touch them. She remembered the fate of Gautama's wife and touched not his feet with her hands;[90] the jewel of the house of Raghu smiled to himself when he saw her marvellous devotion."[91]

Kambar's Sita never has any such apprehension. When Rama is about to start on his exile, Tulasi's Sita at first does not herself express her desire direct to join him but only 'traces marks upon the ground with her fair toenails.' It is Kaushalya that tells Sita about the difficulties of forest life in the beginning and then Rama, but finally Sita wins. In Kambar, Rama directly comes to Sita and breaks the news of exile for fourteen years and asks her to stay at Ayodhya, mentioning about the 'stony wilds that burn like the molten wax'. Sita's reply is:

"* * * But can the stony wilds burn more than separation from My Ram?"[92]

Saying this, she goes into a chamber and comes out dressed in coarse robes ready to leave for the woods.[93] Rama still says that her coming will give trouble. Sita says with righteous anger:

"That trouble will be caused only due to my accompanying you, and perhaps but for it you will be enjoying in the forest."[94]

Rama has to yield.

90. As a foot note, W.D.P. Hill, the translator of Tulasi Ramayan says, "This obscure allusion affords commentators of indulging in a precious stones on her hands, and she was afraid that if they touched number of fantastic explanations; for example; Sita was wearing Rama's feet, they might turn into women like Ahalya, and share Rama's love". (The Holy Lake of the Acts of Rama — W.D.P. Hill, p. 119.

91. Ram Charit Manas (1-298-4 and Doha 298).

92. Kamba Ramayanam (2-4-228).

93. *Ibid.*, (2-4-230).

94. *Ibid.*, (2-4-234).

On her way to the forest, Tulasi's Sita freely moves with the village women and wins their hearts with her modesty. Once the aborigines put her in an embarrassing situation asking her relationship with Rama. The poet says :

> "She hid for face, fair as the moon, with the border of her robe, and looked towards her husband with knitted brows; glancing side-ways like a pretty wagtail, Sita showed them by signs that that was her Lord."[95]

This shows, in the words of Shri K. B. Jindal, 'a whole picture of impish bashfulness of a girl.'

At Panchavati, Kambar's Sita makes Lakshmana go to Rama's help by telling him in rage :

> "You heard my prince of faultless character
> Has fallen by the guile of Rakshas vile;
> And still you tarry ! Are you a brother true?"[96]

and again scorning at him she says—

> "And some there are their very life lay down
> On but a day's acquaintance, but you heard
> The dying cry of him your elder one;
> You startled not! You stand! what else can I
> But end my life in fire!"[97]

Tulasi's Sita is different. She first says, "Make haste and go; your brother is in dire peril! " But Lakshmana only smiles saying, "Hearken Mother, is it possible that he by the play of whose eyebrows creation is dissolved should fall into trouble?" On this, Sita utters some deep wounding words,[98] touching upon

95. Ram Charit Manas (2-118-3, 4).

96. Kamba Ramayanam (3-8-4).

97. *Ibid.*, (3-8-13)

98. Ram Charit Manas (3-34-3) — Tulasidas does not like to explain 'the very touching and wounding words' that are stated in Valmiki, wherein it is said that Sita doubted in the character of Lakshmana.

Lakshmana's very character. Commenting on this statement of Sita, K. B. Jindal says:

> "Tulasidas's misogyny did not spare even Sita. The goddess of the home and the hearth, insinuates such motives to Lakshman as no sensible lady would do.... To know what the insinuation ('marma bachana') was, we have to go to the source. In the Adhyatma Ramayana Sita suspects that Lakshmana does not go to the succour of Ram because he would practise levirate after the demise of his brother."[99]

These words force Lakshmana to leave the place.

Kambar, evidently having in mind the character of Kannahi in the Tamil epic Silappadiharam who burnt the city of Madurai by her chastity, speaks of the power of Sita's chastity when she rejects Hanuman's suggestion to carry her back to Rama:

> "* * * Let be the boundless worlds entire,
> I could with curses burn. As slight 'twould be
> To prowess great of Ram with th'bow, the thought
> I banned."[100]

After Ravana's death Rama sends Hanuman to convey the news to Sita. Hanuman asks her to permit him to kill all the demonesses excluding Trijata, but Sita says:

> "What harm have these e'er done, but spoke to me
> E'en as he bid them speak?"[101]

This compassion even to those who troubled her, is a special trait in the character of Kambar's Sita.

When all return in the Pushpaka plane, Sita of Kambar, on reaching Kishkindha tells Rama:

> "'Tis duty thine to take into this car
> The Vanar damsels too!"[102]

Commenting on this trait of Sita V. V. S. Iyer states, "Who but Sita can picture better the anxiety-ridden hearts of wives parted from husbands, and sweethearts from lovers, and it is solicitude which prompts her request, but she would, life all givers, make the receiver a giver seem."[103]

99 'The History of Hindi Literature'—K. B. Jindal, pp. 85, 86.
100 Kamba Ramayanam (5-6-18)
101. *Ibid.*, (6-37-34).
102. *Ibid.*, (6-37-176)
103 'Kamba Ramayanam - A Study' — V. V. S. Iyer, p. 337.

This indicates her feeling of pity.

However in both, we find Sita as 'the Gem of chastity', a noble wife', 'a worthy daughter fitting her descent from Janaka', 'a crown bestowed—the Goddess', 'she matching to her alone', 'a maiden rare of virtues great' with 'a stern austerity of Austerity herself."[104]

24. *Kaushalya* :

Kamban's Kaushalya did not know that Rama was Vishnu-incarnate, whereas Tulasi's sees him at birth taking Vishnu's form with four hands and the celestial emblems.[105] He requests her not to divulge the secret[106] and also requests him with folded hands :

> "Never again, O Lord, may thy magic power affect me with its influence!"[107]

Thereafter Rama assumes human form and plays just like a child.

Certain other specific traits are also found in both the epics. Tulasi's Kaushalya gives greater weight to the words of Kaikeyi, 'the affectionate mother of Rama' than to those of even her husband. She says to Rama :

> "If it be only your father's will, my son, then go not, for you should put your mother first; but if both father and your mother bid you go to the forest, the forest is equal to a hundred Avadhs."[108]

However she tells him earlier that 'obedience to a father's command is ones highest duty'.[109] Here she only feels that by his retiring to the forest, Bharata, king and the people may feel greatly distressed.[110]

104. Kamba Ramayanam (5-15-58 to 60, 62 to 64).
105 Ram Charit Manas (1-224-Four Chandas).
106 *Ibid.*, (1-234-4)
107 *Ibid.* (1-234).
108 *Ibid.* (2-57-1)
109 *Ibid.*, (2-56-4).
110 *Ibid.* (2-56) - See also (2-283)

In Tulasi, Kaushalya as an affectionate mother-in-law tries to passify Sita and advises her not to accompany Rama in his exile. But in Kambar, Kaushalya does not come into the picture at all.

In Tulasi, Kaushalya and her co-queens attempt to die with the king, but Bharata stops them holding their feet.[111] This is not found in Kambar.

In Tulasi, Kausha'ya tells Sunayana, the mother of Sita, to request Janaka, her husband, to pursuade Lakshmana to stay back and Bharata to accompany Rama to the forest.[112] This suggestion by Kaushalya is not found in Kambar.

In Kambar, Kaushalya stops Bharata from falling into the fire saying :

"* * * * * But what
Is it that thou'rt about, O child? It is
A thoughtless deed; for if thou end thy life,
Our chiefs and people and thy mothers all
Will feed the fire and end themselves.

* * * * *

Thou knowest not thy greatness, Bharata!
We have not seen a higher righteousness
With these our eyes than thy own holy life.
* * * * * Ten million million Ramas ev'n
Can never approach the love immaculate
That burns within thy soul!"[113]

This scene depicting the sublime sentiment of Kaushalya is not found in Tulasi.

25. *Sumitra* :

She alone is blessed with two sons, one of whom goes to the forest with Rama, and the other is an inseparable companion of Bharata. Her 'simplicity, straightforwardness and the beauty of

111. *Ibid.*, (2-171-1).
112. *Ibid.*, (2-285-1).
113. Kamba Ramayanam (6-37-230, 231, 232).

the inner spirit of heart which is a shrine of virtue and of lofty ideals' are depicted both by Kambar and Tulasidas. In Kambar, she tells Lakshmana that when Rama goes to the forest, that forest becomes Ayodhya, Rama becomes the king and Sita becomes mother to him, and asks him to go with Rama to the forest. Continuing she says:

> "You should wait on your brother as a devoted servant would do, and not attend on him as a brother. Follow his lead wherever his feet may roam and return hither in his company. But if by some mishap he is unable to return safely, end your existence before he does."[114]

Tulasi's Sumitra also, expressing similar sentiments, states that he has no business to be at Ayodhya when Rama and Sita leave for the forest.[115] She adds that it is only because of his good fortune that Rama is going to the forest, and that here is no other cause for it.[116]

26. *Kaikeyi*:

The poets radically differ in moulding the character of Kaikeyi. In Tulasi, her mind is given a change due to the influence of gods' illusion, and she belives the words of Manthara and acts accordingly. The poet says:

> "When she (Kaikeyi) heard these subtle words (of Manthara), cloaked in affection, the queen, weak-minded woman as she was and influenced by divine delusion thought her enemy to be her friend and trusted her."[117]

No such divine delusion is referred to by Kambar. Her transformation on the ill-advice of Manthara is, according to Kambar, only due to fate. Bharadwaja in Tulasi tells Bharata—

> "Be not down-cast when you remember what your mother has done; my son, Kaikeyi is not to blame, for it was Saraswati who prevented her reason."[118]

114. *Ibid.*, (2-4-151, 152)—Trn. by C. P. Venkatarama Aiyar.
115. Ram Charit Manas (2-75-1 to 4).
116. *Ibid.*, (2-76-2).
117. Ram Charit Manas (2-17).
118. *Ibid.*, (2-207).

However at Chitrakoota Kaikeyi repents for her action:

> "When the wicked Queen Kaikeyi saw how simple Sita was, and the two brothers also, she bitterly repented, and prayed to earth and the god of death; but earth opened not to swallow her, nor would God grant her to die."[119]

27. *Manthara* :

Kambar's Manthara is hit on her hunch by mud balls by the playful Rama as a boy, which, together with her sincere affection for her queen Kaikeyi, prompts her to ill-advise, against Rama's coronation, but Tulasi's Manthara is only a machine in the hands of goddess Saraswati who "plays on her intellect and uses her as a vehicle for the fulfilment of God's purpose."[120] Tulasidas says:

> "Kaikeyi had a wicked hand-maid, whose name was Manthara her mind Saraswati perverted and filled with a stone of infamy, and then departed."[121]

But Kambar's Manthara undergoes no such perversion. She feels greatly upset by the sudden news of the coronation of that very Rama who had hit her, and that too in the absence of Bharata, and advises Kaikeyi that it would be better for Bharata and Shatrughna to go out for penance or even die, if Bharata does not get the throne.[122]

28. *Tataka* :

Tulasidas finishes Tataka's part of the epic in just one chaupayi which says:

> "As they (Rama and Lakshmana with sage Vishwamitra) went on, the sage pointed out Tataka and when she heard him, she rushed up in a rage. With a single arrow the Lord took her life, and granted her in pity a place in his own realm".[123]

119. Ram Charit Manas (2-253-3).
120. 'A History of Hindi Literature' — K. B. Jindal, p. 64.
121 Ram Charit Manas (2-13).
122. Kamba Ramayanam (2-2-57, 58.)
123. Ram Charit Manas (1-242-3).

But Kambar has a whole chapter of seventysix stanzas, giving the details of Tataka, a very dangerous demoness, 'whom it would be no sin to kill, for she is not fit to be called a woman.'[124]

29. *Ahalya*:

Tulasidas has finished the whole incident about Ahalya in but a few stanzas. The previous story of Ahalya is not described. She is lying in the form of a stone due to the curse of Gautama, her husband. Vishwamitra says to Rama that she needs the holy dust of his feet and requests him to shower his grace on her.[125] Rama touches the stone with his foot and instantaneously Ahalya gets up in her original form, singing the glory and greatness of Rama.[126] She says that it was good that her husband gave her that curse, because she has the good fortune to see the Lord.

Kambar in a chapter of eightly six stanzas relates her story in full and says that she was not aware that it was Indra who had come disguised as her husband. Ahalya's incident helps Vishwamitra to actually see the great power of Rama's feet and the sage says:

> "With Tataka I saw the strength of thine arm,
> And here I see the virture of thy feet."[127]

In Tulasi it is this incident which creates a sense of fear in Sita while touching the feet of Rama at the time of marriage.

30. *Mandavi, Urmila,*[128] *Shrutikirti*:

These are the wives of Bharata, Lakshmana and Shatrughna respectively. They are not spoken of in any detail in either of the epics.

124. Kamba Ramayanam (1-7-64).
125. Ram Charit Manas (1-243).
126. *Ibid.*, (1-244-Chand 3.)
127 Kamba Ramayanam (1-9-82).
128. On the Pathos of Urmila, 'Saket', an epic in Hindi has been brought out by Rashtra Kavi Maithili Sharan Gupta, in which the ninth chapter is a unique contribution to her. This is in fulfilment of the desire of Mahavir Prasad Dwivedi on the words of Rabindranath Tagore that Yashodhara and Urmila who have been neglected, deserve the pen of a master artist.

31. *Shoorpanakha:*

Tulasidas introduces Shoorpanakha as 'vile at heart and venomous as a snake'.[129] Kambar also pictures her like-wise. In both, she comes with a beautiful form[130] to match the extraordinary beauty of Rama. In Tulasi she gets frustrated immediately when both Rama and Lakshmana reject her, and resumes her real dreadful form[131] and receives the cuts. In Kambar, she suggests to Rama that Sita might be a demoness disguised.[132] She returns and spends a night of burning passion and comes again early next morning in the absence of Rama and gets near the cottage with the intention to carry away Sita so that Rama may later marry her [133]. She gets disfigured by Lakshmana but tries to make out that it was also to her own advantage by imagining within herself that consequently none else would later fall in love with her.

In Tulasi she goes to Ravana after the demise of Khara with his forces and infuriates him against Rama and Lakshmana and creates in him a passion for Sita. In Kambar she describes Sita's extraordinary beauty in such a manner that Ravana forgets the death of Khara-Dhooshana etc. and even his sister's lot but not Sita's beauty.[134] He gets a hallucination of Sita and asks Shoorpanaka whether that is Sita. Shoorpanaka is still so infatuated with Rama that she sees Rama's form.[135] Ravana questions why she sees Rama. She has the presence of mind to answer that she could not forget him who was the cause of her troubles. She had already requested Ravana:

> "* * * Possess her, immerse thy soul
> In love, while all the world shall sing in joy
> Thy marriage song: a guerdon now I claim:
> Put forth thy valour and, defeating Ram,
> Wed me to him, for, him I love as life.[136]

* * * * * *

129. Ram Charit Manas (3-20-2).
130. *Ibid.*, (3-20-4) and Kamba Ramayanam (3-5-30, 31).
131. Ram Charit Manas (3-20-10).
132. Kamba Ramayanam (3-5-63).
133. *Ibid.*, (3-5-90, 92).
134. *Ibid.*, (3-7-83).
135. *Ibid.*, (3-7-149).
136. *Ibid.*, (3-7-79).

"* * * 'Tis such a fair that I did try
To bring for thee, when Lakshman brother of Ram
Attacked and wounded me. I hurried here
To tell thee this, and after telling all,
To go and end my life disgraced for ever!"[137]

It is worthwhile to note the manner in which she speaks to Ravana. Tulasi's Shoorpanakha talks with anger and no respect for him and goes on finding fault with his actions and way of life. But Kambar's Shoorpanakha 'talks to him as a suppliant and not as a virago who is used to treat her brother with scant courtesy'. She comes as 'an injured suppliant with hand over her head.[138]

32. *Tara* :

Kambar has described the keen intellect of Tara in detail, about which Tulasi makes but a brief statement. Tulasi's Tara tries to stop Vali from his fight with Sugriva by saying only about the prowess of Rama, but Kambar's Tara says :

"Sugriva knows thy strength by proof, my Lord,
And ne'er can stand against thy iron fists.
He is not born again to hope afresh,
Nor has he greater strength acquired today.
By blessings of the Gods ; if now he dares
To challenge thee, it is because he has
An ally strong enough to give him hopes
Of easy victory."[139]

Only when Vali persists, Tara tells him what she heard about Rama from shrewd and trustworthy servants. He does not yield to the good and great qualities of Rama. In spite of the advice of Tara he fights and dies.

After Vali's death, Tulasi's Rama 'finding Tara greatly worried graces her with wisdom removing her ignorance.'[140] But

137. *Ibid.*. (3-7-81).
138. 'Kamba Ramayanam -4 A Study' — V. V. S. Iyer, p. 237.
139. Kamba Ramayanam (4-7-15).
140. Ram Charit Manas (4-13-2).

Kambar's Tara now cries accusing Rama of untoward action, unworthy of a great warrior,[141] and praises the great prowess of her husband. She is not blessed by Rama with wisdom or inner vision.

After the rainy season, in Tulasi, just a small statement is found about Tara going with Hanuman to bring the infuriated Lakshmana home. But Kambar gives a vivid picture of an ideal widow whose sight brings forth tears from Lakshmana's eyes reminding him of his own widowed mothers.[142] She becomes a wise adviser. Seeing Lakshmana coming, Angada and others directly go to Tara for advice. On the suggestion of the minister Hanuman, she goes with a few other ladies. Her very sight cools down the anger of Lakshmana. Hanuman does the rest of the work. Tulasi's Tara is totally different. He says:

> "The very crime for which he (Rama) like a huntsman killed Vali, was in turn the sin of Sugriva."[143]

This brings down the character of Tara in spite of her getting wisdom and removal of ignorance by the grace of Rama.

33. *Trijata :*

Kambar's Trijata is the daughter of Vibhishana,[144] while Tulasi's Trijata is an elderly good-natured and intelligent demoness with devotion at the feet of Rama. She has only one dream in Tulasi, but two in Kambar, to console Sita at the Ashoka garden. In Tulasi, Sita requests her to prepare a pyre for burning herself to death. Trijata holds her feet and consoles her reminding her of the great strength and fame of the Lord, and states that fire cannot be got at night. So saying she leaves the place.[145]

141. Kamba Ramayanam (4-8-16).
142. *Ibid.*, (4-11-52).
143. Ram Charit Manas (1-46-3).
144. Kamba Ramayanam (5-3-22).
145. Ram Charit Manas (5-12-3).

Trijata's deep devotion and high imagination are portrayed by Tulasidas when she consoles Sita again during the war of Rama with Ravana. Trijata says to Sita :

> "Hearken, princess, if an arrow pierce his heart, the enemy of heaven will die; but the Lord strikes not his heart because the princess of Videha dwells therein.[146] He thinks 'in his heart dwells Janaki and in Janaki's heart is my home; and in my heart are countless worlds; the stroke of an arrow would mean universal destruction."[147]

She continues :

> "Now this is how the enemy will be slain; hearken, fair lady, and doubt no more the issue. The severing of his heads will so distrub him that the thought of you will escape him, and then the All-wise-Rama will strike Ravana to the heart."[148]

In Kambar, when Maya Janaka is shown to Sita, Trijata tells her of the false show.

34. *Sabari* :

Though both have depicted her as a great devotee, Kambar's Sabari tells Rama that she has just been invited by Lord Shiva, Brahma, Indra and all the gods to come to their heavens, and that she stayed back only to see Rama and then to go over there.[149] Rama praises her devotion and bestows his blessings. Tulasi's Sabari gives totally a different account of herself. She stands with folded hands before Rama, and says :

> "I am a woman of low caste and altogether ignorant, the lowest of the low and -lower still- a woman, and of women too, the dullest, O Enemy of Sin!"[150]

146. *Ibid.*, (5-124-6, 7).
147. *Ibid.*, (5-124-Chand).
148. *Ibid.*, (5-124).
149. Kamba Ramayanam (3-11-4).
150. Ram Charit Manas (3-42-1, 2).

Then Rama tells her the nine types of faith and pays a tribute to her that she has all the nine.[151] Then Rama blesses her saying :

> "Therefore this day you may with ease attain that blessed state which ascetics scarcely reach. The vision of myself brings with it this most incomparable reward, that the individual soul attains to its own original form."[152]

Thereafter in both the epics, Sabari tells Rama the way to Kishkindha and asks him to befriend Sugriva. In Tulasi, she relates to Rama the entire story till his return to Ayodhya as heard from the sage Matanga.[153] This vision of the future in Sabari is not stated by Kambar. Then in both, she leaves her body and achieves eternal salvation.

35. *Mandodari* :

In Kambar, she is so ideal a wife of Ravana that she dies with him at the battle-field itself, but in Tulasi she is more a devotee of Rama and knows him to be the incarnation of Lord Vishnu. She does not die with Ravana, but Tulasi states that she lived later with Vibhishana :

> "Thus the very crime for which Rama like a huntsman killed Vali was in turn, the sin of Sugriva and again of Vibhishan."[154]

Thus this character is treated differently by the two poets.

In her devotion to Rama, Mandodari of Tulasidas has a very poor opinion of Ravana's strength and tells him directly :

> "Hear what I would say, my husband, and be not wroth. Fight, sire, with one whom you can vanquish in strength and understanding. The difference between yourself and Raghupati is of a truth the difference between a

151. *Ibid.,* (3-43-4).
152. *Ibid.,* (3-43-4, 5).
153. Commentary by Shyam Sundar Das in his edition of 'Ram Charit Manas', p. 699.
154. *Ibid.,* (1-46-3, 4).

> firefly and the sun. * * * * Strive not, O king with him in whose hand are fate and destiny and the souls of living creatures. Deliver up Janaki to Rama and bow your head before his lotus feet; entrust the kingdom to your son, go to the woods and worship Raghunath. Lord, abandoning all carnal affections, worship that Raghubir who loves his suppliants. He for whose sake great sages practice austerities and kings forsake their kingdoms and become ascetics, even that Raghuraya, king of Koshala, has come to have mercy upon you."

She continues with eyes full of tears, holding his feet and shivering:

> "O King, worship Raghunath, that I may ever be your happy wedded wife!"[155]

Kambar's Mandodari also asks him to return Sita and purchase peace and happiness, but not by demeaning in any way the prowess of Ravana.

Tulasi's Mandodari, on another occasion tells Ravana not to think of Rama as a mere man, and continues with folded hands and tearful eyes:

> "Believe me when I tell you that the jewel of the house of Raghu is the All; for the Vedas declare that in his every limb is the fashioning of a sphere. His feet are the lower world, his head the home of Brahma, and in each one of his limbs there rest the other spheres. The play of his eye-brows is dread fate, his eyes are the sun, his hair the massing clouds. * * * In short, the Lord is All; what need of further argument? His consciousness of self is Shiva, his reason Brahma, his mind the moon and the Great one his intelligence; and he, even Rama the Blessed Lord, who is one with all created things, has come to dwell with us as man.

155. *Ibid*, (6-9-3 to 6-10).

> Hearken, thou Lord of my life; consider this and cease to strive with the Lord. Devote yourself to the feet of Raghubir so that my wedded happiness may not be lost."[156]

Finding Ravana not yielding, she gets 'inwardly assured that fate has sent her husband's wits astray.'[157] Again, once she reminds him of his inability even to cross the line drawn by Lakshmana[158] and his failure to lift up Shiva's bow at Mithila[159] which Rama broke with ease, and asks him, "how then are you going to win the war?"[160]

Lastly when she finds the severed heads of Ravana lying before her, she thinks of his great bravery of the past, and laments:

> "Now Jackals are devouring your heads and arms — fit recompense for quarelling with Rama! Victim of fate, my husband, you heeded no advice, and deemed the Lord of all creation to be but mortal man."[161]

Denouncing him again and finding solace in the worship of Rama, she says:

> "From birth you have made it your aim to injure others, and this body of yours has been one mass of sin; but Rama now has granted you a place in his own realm, and him I worship, the faultless Absolute! Ah, my

156. *Ibid.* (6-20-4 to 6-22).
157. *Ibid.*, (6-23-4).
158. *Ibid.*, (6-55-1),
159. *Ibid.*, (6-55-5, 6).
160. *Ibid.* (6-55-6).
161. Commenting on this, K. B. Jindal states in his 'A History of Hindi Literature', p. 85 as follows:
"He (Tulasidas) makes Mandodari rebuke Ravana in a language which no decent lady will use for her husband; and in the end she does not lament her widowhood but is engaged in decrying her husband even after death: 'Now jackals are devouring your heads and arms — fit recompense for quarelling with Rama!' (Translation by W. D. P. Hill). How unnatural! And yet Tulasidas must violate the maxim of NIL NISI BONUM". Dr. Mata Prasad Gupta is of the opinion that here Tulasidas has committed an 'Unpardonable crime'. Tulasidas — p. 298).

husband, there is no other Lord so merciful as Raghunath, the Blessed God, who has bestowed on you the final liberation that contemplatives hardly win."[162]

Then after funeral oblations she returns home.[163]

Kambar's Mandodari is of a different type. She only requests Ravana to return Sita on the ground that it is against righteousness, and not because she took Rama to be God. When Indrajit dies, she bursts out in lamentation recapitulating his past glory and prowess :

"When like the waxing moon, thou grew'st in years
I had the fortune, my son, with pride to see
Thee conquer Indra; but now thy headless corpse
To see and mourn — O son, what have I done
To behold this plight? and still I cling to live,
Inconsistent life!"[164]

"In olden blessed days,
With tinkling anklets when thou wert yet a child
Slow-crawling on the ground, thou brought'st a pair
Of fierce lions and made them fight behold!"[165]

Thus Kambar shows that she was a mother of an extraordinaryily brave son. On seeing his death, she falls despondent about the future and says :

"Of all the hosts that out of Lanka marched
To meet in battle Rama and his force,
None has as yet with life returned. Alas!
Like stubble they have gone, at touch of fire!
Alas! I fear that Sita's sacred charms,
Destiny-like will drive my Ravan too
To an untimely, gory death!"[166]

162. *Ibid*, (6-130-6 to 6-130).
163. *Ibid.*, (6-131).
164. Kamba Ramayanam (6-28-47).
165. *Ibid.*, (6-28-49).
166. *Ibid.*, (6-28-53).

Here she fears not the prowess of Rama or his godhood, but the power of chastity. In Tulasi, she does not utter anything on the death of Indrajit, but weeps bitterly beating her chest.[167]

Ravana's death, she feels, was only due to his unrighteous passion for Sita. Lamenting she says recapitulating the great prowess and actions of her mighty husband :

"The noble frame that lifted high the hill
Of Shiv is pierced through and through by darts:
There is not even space for a ses'mum seed
To rest o'er all its vast expanse? Did Ram-
Desire to sound and see the exact spot
Where did reside my Ravan's mighty spirit?
Or did that hero's conscious darts believe
That love for Janaki might yet remain
Concealed within that handsome frame, and did
They probe for it, o'er every needle-point
Of space therein?"[168]

She again speaks of Ravana only in glorifying terms as 'my mighty Ravana', 'that noble and handsome frame that lifted high the hill of Shiv', and blames only his passion for the chaste Janaki. She concludes that 'the beauty of Sita, her chastity Ravana's passion for her, the severed nose of Shoorpanakha and the arrival of Rama on the words of Dasharatha, his father, have finally turned out to be the rewards for the penance of Indra.'[169] She had full confidence in the strength of her husband and was of the opinion that her mighty husband can never die, and only feels surprised to see that he died at the hands of a mere man.[170] She finds out the answer, and says that the boon which Ravana had got has been like a sea of milk and that Sita the chaste, curdled it as if with a sour drop. Thinking deeply as to who that man could be that killed Ravana whom none in any of the fourteen worlds could ever have won, realises that Sita is the wife of none

167 Ram Charit Manas (6-100-4).

168. Kamba Ramayanam (6-36-239).

169. *Ibid.*, (6-36-241).

170. *Ibid.*, (6-36-242).

but Lord Narayana himself.[171] Understanding the gross mistake committed by her husband, she cries aloud and falls dead on Ravana.[172]

Summary :

The characters being the same in Kamba Ramayanam and Tulasi Ramayan, the two poets have portrayed them independently so as to suit their versions of the same story. In both, Rama is Vishnu-incarnate but in Kambar he is conscious of his being an incarnation but not so in Tulasi. So is Sita too in Kambar and Tulasi. Kambar has tried to idealise all his characters as far as possible without losing the human touch, keeping in view the traditions of Tamil literature. Tulasidas pictures Rama in a spirit of high devotion but he allows some characters to stray away from the path of human righteousness. Kambar's characters are more colossalised than Tulasi's. Human achievement is more predominant in Kambar's characters whereas in Tulasi, divine powers work much more than the characters. In certain situations, however, the characters of both the poets act humanly or superhumanly alike.

171. *Ibid.*, (6-36-245).
172. *Ibid.*, (6-36-246).

CHAPTER — VI.

LITERARY EXCELLENCE AND SOCIOLOGICAL CONCEPTS.

I — SENTIMENTS (NAVA-RASA)

Aesthetic pleasure (Rasa) is supposed to be the *summum bonum* of literature. Poetry should awaken the sleeping or innate feelings or sentiments of the reader (or hearer) and create in him a joy based fundamentally upon those sentiments. The writings about the inner and outer worlds of human beings should be so brought before the mind's eye that he must be made to enjoy them. A true poet should vibrate the vital chords of the human mind and that too in such a way that he does not touch the mind directly but only create an unattached, dispassionate sympathy for the feelings, which, in turn, would yield pleasure and nothing but pleasure. It should reveal the unseen beauty and beauty alone, truth and truth alone — not in the crude sense of the term but in the aesthetic sense. This, for all great literatures, should be the zenith. That literature which creates this aesthetic pleasure in a

plentiful measure should be considered as one with literary excellence, and will have to be considered as great for all people of all times. It should be a source of eternal happiness. Pratap Chandra Roy says:

> "Literature, in respect of its demand or usefulness either, is more than anything else in the world, a cosmopolitan concern. The products of genius are the common inheritance of the world. Homer lived as much for the Greeks, ancient or modern, as for Englishmen or Frenchmen, Germans or Italians. Valmiki and Vyasa lived as much for Hindus as for any race of men capable of understanding them."[1]

In the Kamba Ramayanam and Tulasi Ramayan, we find hundreds and hundreds of places where the master poets take the readers to those heights of supreme bliss where they get immersed in the aesthetic pleasures of the different sentiments. The ever-innate-sentiments are supposed to be nine in number which go to please the readers with the "Nava Rasa"[2] They are Love (Sringara), Pathos (Karuna), Heroism, (Veera), Humour (Hasya), Anger (Raudra), Fear (Bhayanaka), Disgust (Veebhatsa), Wonder (Adbhuta) and Peace (Shanta).

1. *Love*: Love is classified under two categories which are pleasure and pain—(a) pleasure in union 'Samyog Shringar' (b) pangs of separation 'Viyog Shringar'. It is called as 'Rasa-Raja' i.e., King of Rasas.

(a) *Pleasure in Union* (Samyog Shringar)—

Kambar: Rama passes by the balcony of Sita and both see each other accidentally for the first time. The seeds of love are

1. 'The Mahabharata'—Vol. I, Pratap Chandra Roy, Introduction, p. viii.

2. Tulasidas treats 'Nava Rasa' in par with prayer, penance, austerity and detachment. While describing his Ramayan as Ram Charit Manas i.e., Holy Lake of the Acts of Rama, the Poet says—

> "The nine sentiments (Nava Rasa) prayer, penance, austerity and detachment—all these are the graceful creatures that swim in the Lake". (1-58-5)

The Poet by placing Nava Rasa first suggests that this is the greatest of achievements in poetry.

sown in the hearts of both with no speech passing between them, for :

"What need was there for words?
Two who were one in the mystic sea, their abode,
Had met again,
Blameless hero and waistless maid
And mingled into one."[3]

Their meeting is described as follows :

"So stood that maiden of rare loveliness
And eye caught eye and each the other ate ;
As quiet they stood, minds into one were fused ;
The hero looked at her and Sita looked at him."[4]

And when she turned her eyes on him—

"The pair of pointed lances called her glance
Sank deep in shoulders broad of handsome Ram ·
The lotus eyes of him with sounding anklets
In turn empierced the bosom of the maid—
Bewitching like enchantress fair of yore.[5]

"Enchained by lassos called her drinking looks,
And heart to heart each one adducing 'main,
He of the banded bow and she with sword-like eyes.
In turn entered each other's heart.[6]

"That she could not the handsome one embrace,
The bangled maiden like a statue stood :
Her heart and will and beauty trailing him.
The youth with sage dissolved from sight."[7]

Tulasi : Rama goes to the garden of Mithila with his younger brother to pluck flowers for performing the rites Sita also comes over there to offer prayers at the temple of Bhavani

3 Kamba Ramayanam (1-10-38) (Trn from 'Leaves from Kamban' – Prof A Srinivasa Raghavan.

4 Kamba Ramayanam (1-10-35).

5 *Ibid.*, (1-10-36).

6 *Ibid.*, (1-10-37)

7. *Ibid.*, (1-10-39).

(Parvati). They both see each other at cross-roads and "None guessed the love that had been theirs of old."[8] The poet says that even before one seeing the other—

> "Hearing the tinkle of her bracelets and anklets, and the bells on her girdle, Rama pondered in his heart and said to Lakshmana, "it sounds as though love were beating his drum, ambitious to vanquish the world!" So saying, he turned and looked in that direction, and his eyes were fixed on Sita's face as the partridge gazes on the moon. Motionless stayed his beauteous eyes, as though Nimi had deserted his eyelids in modest confusion. When he saw Sita's beauty he was glad; he praised her in his heart but spoke no word.[9] * * * * Anxiously Sita looked all around, wondering where the princes had gone. Wherever she glanced with her fawn-like eyes, there seemed to rain down a shower of white lotus blooms. Then the maidens showed her the handsome princes, one dark, one fair, hidden by a creeper; and when she saw their graceful forms, her eyes were filled with longing, as glad as though they looked upon their treasure. Her eyes grew tired with gazing on Raghupati's beauty; even her eyelids ceased to move; she was faint with excess of love, like the partridge when she looks on the autumn moon. She drew Rama into her heart by the pathway of her eyes and carefully closed on him the door of her eyelids.[10] * * * * She looked on Rama's graceful form from head to foot, and when she remembered her father's vow, she was greatly troubled[11] * * * * She drew Rama into her heart and turned to go; she knew her hand was at her father's disposal. Pretending to look back at a deer or a bird or a tree, she turned again and again, and as each time she beheld the beauty of Raghubir, her love grew ever greater.[12] * * * * When the Lord saw

8. Ram Charit Manas (1-262-4).

9. *Ibid.*, (1-263-1 to 3).

10. *Ibid.*, (1-265-1 to 4).

11. *Ibid.*, (1-267-2).

12. *Ibid.*, (1-267-4 to Doha 267)

Janaki departing, that mine of joy and love and beauty and virtue, then with the gentle ink of deep devotion h traced her fair from on the tablet of his soul."[13]

This scene is supposed to be the 'Sumeru' Mount of Gold in the Himalayas of Ram Charit Manas.[14]

(b) *Pangs of separation (Vi yog Shringar)*—

Kambar: Ravana abducts Sita and carries her away wit the cottage and the land beneath from Panchavati in the abse of Rama and Lakshmana. He places the very cottage in the Ashoka garden and, after uttering some conciliatory words to her, goes away imprisoning (the image of) Sita in his heart. Sita now feels greatly despondent and bitterly laments. The poet says:

"Surrounded by the thronging Rakshasis
Of hefty loins, like mountain medicine herb
Sheer foreigner to moisture, even so,
Shrivelled was she of bloom; and even like
Her slender waist, her body all was worn.

"Forsaken had her eyes sleep or droop
Of lids in weariness or even wink:
Of body lustreless like a lamp in th' sun,
So like a doe 'midst fang-ed tigers wild,
She seemed.

"Fall, sob, burn the body e'er;
Start, yearn, grieve, think on Ram
And worship mute; droop, quake, sigh :
With racking woe-wee-naught else but these
She knew to do."[15]

"The heavy cloud, collyrium black,
Aught else deep dark, espying would shed tears
On rushing to the sea."[16]

13. *Ibid.*, (1-268-1, 2).
14. 'Manas—Bala Kanda ke Srot'—Shreesh Kumar, p. 19.
15. Kamba Ramayanam (5-3-3 to 5).
16. Ibid., (5-3-7). As Rama was dark in colour, she would sob to see anything resembling even in colour. Thought or 'Smarana' is the 'Sanchari' here, with the figure of speech of 'Atyantatishayokti Alankara', i. e., extreme hyperbole.

"'I'd fain give up this life, but seldom can
One's fate surmounted be', she feared and thought
'For sake of Surya's race and blot thereto,
He would come, come he would,[17] the Veda's Lord:'
Thus hoping e'er she quartered all around
The compass points with piercing eyes."[18]

Now her mind gets puzzled and thinks that Lakshmana might not have met Rama or even if he had met, they may not know of the island of Lanka. She shivers to think of the death of Jatayu and concludes that none else can possibly tell them of her situation. She gets worried over her sinful words wanting in wisdom to Lakshmana. She even doubts that they might have taken her to be dead having fallen in the hands of demons.

She also imagines another possibility:

"Perchance his brothers and mothers, have they come
Again, and called him back to lovely Oudh?
But he would never return, the while the days
To Kaikey vowed unfulfilled yet remain.
Alas, has any ill befallen him?"[19]

Now she recapitulates all the past from the beginning, and undergoes terrible 'tortures bitter-sweet', 'swoons remembering her dauntless lion', 'meditates on that fair face of his' which only bloomed like a pictorial lotus to hear of the forest life,[20] pines away recollecting his shoulders, 'sobs inconsolably thinking of him and lifts her hands over her head in obeisance'.

Tulasi: Ravana carries Sita away and, after showing fear and love in various manners, places her in the Ashoka garden under the care of his demonesses. Tulasidas now describes her in her sorrows:

"She had been sitting the whole night through with wasted frame and hair knotted up in a single braid upon her head, and was repeating to herself the tale

17. A ray of hope is still there in her, and hence 'Viyoga Sringara Rasa', failing which it would have turned to Pathos 'Karuna Rasa', as we shall see in the case of Dasharatha.
18. Kamba Ramayanam (5-3-9).
19. *Ibid.*, (5-3-17).
20. *Ibid.*, 5-3-20).

of Raghupati's virtues. With her eyes fixed upon her own feet she was mentally absorbed in the lotus feet of Rama."[21]

After her failure to get fire from Trijata for burning herself, she says in tears piteously mourning:

"'God himself has turned against me' cried Sita, 'No fire to be had and no end to my torture! The heavens above are brilliant with scintillating sparks, but not one single star comes down to earth!' The moon is a ball of fire but casts no fire down, as if it knew me for a luckless wretch! Hear my prayer, Ashoka tree; be true to your name[22] and relieve me of my pain! Thy fresh young shoots are red like fire. Give me that fire and let not my desolation move to its bitter climax.'"[23]

2. *Pathos:*

Kambar: Kumbhakarna falls dead on the battlefield by the shaft of Rama. Ravana, while returning after the Maya Janaka incident before Sita, hears of the heart-rending news from his messengers, and instantaneously faints down on earth like a mammoth sala tree uprooted.[24] Now the Poet says:

"From childhood's days they had not lived apart:
Though two their bodies, their life was only one.
When such a brother died, and for his sake,
The heart of Ravan broke in two, he swooned;
And thus lamented he his fate aloud:

21. Ram Charit Manas (5-8-4 and Doha 8). Earlier the Poet had said —"Sita remained, constantly repeating the name of Hari and laying the Lord Rama's beauteous form upon her heart, as he appeared when chasing the pretended deer." (3-36).

22. 'Ashoka' means 'without pain'.

23. Ram Charit Manas (5-11-4, 5, 6). It is now that Hanuman drops the signet ring of Rama from the tree which falls as if a spark is offered to Sita on her request. She joyfully picks it up, and to her immense surprise finds it to be the ring carrying the name of her lord (5-13-1).

24. Kamba Ramayanam (6-16-76).

'O Brother, who last destroyed the Danav hosts,
As a tasker does the o'er-grown lotus pond!
O here, who erased'st great Indra's name
From the list of Kings! O first of Rakshasas!
Lived I so long alone to hear these words?
O thou of the flashing lance, thy dear face
Is hid from me: I speak these words and yet
I cling to life! If thou hast gone, O brother
In the hardness of thy heart abandoning me,
Who will believe again in brotherhood's love?"[25]

* * * * *

"While thou wert marching proud in victory
To victory, I had my fill of the joy
Of life, but now that thou art dead, my brother,
I do not care to live, I cannot live
Alone nor shall I let thee go alone:
I come, my elephant proud, I come, I come!"[26]

Tulasi: When Dasharata hears the departure of Rama into the forest from Sumantra, the Charioteer, Dasharatha's condition is described by the poet in such a way that it is a fitting example of pathos. The poet says:—

> "When he heard the charioteer's story, the monarch fell to the ground in an agony of despair and writhed like a frantic mad man, as fish writhe when doubled by the early rains."[27]

Now Kaushalya tries to console him to gain courage stating that Rama, Sita and Lakshmana will certainly return, but there is no effect of her words on Dasharatha. The poet now says:

> "When he heard his dear wife's tender speech, the king opened his eyes and looked up; she was like one pouring cold water on a miserable writhing fish. Composing himself, the king sat up and said, 'Tell me

25. *Ibid.*, (6-16-77, 78, 80).
26. *Ibid.*, (6-16-86).
27. Ram Charit Manas (2-154-3).

Sumantra, where is the gracious Rama? Where is Lakshman? Where is my beloved Rama? Where is dear Sita, my son's wife?' Many a lamentation did the king utter in his sorrow; the night seemed as long as an age and would never end. The king recalled the blind ascetic's curse, and related the whole story to Kaushalya; and as he told the tale he fell a-sorrowing and cried, 'A curse on my will to live apart from Rama! Why should I cling any longer to a body that has failed to fulfil the promise of my love? Alas, Raghunandan, dear to me as life! Too many days have I lived without you! Ah, Janaki and Lakshman! Ah Raghubir! balm to your father's heart as a rain-cloud to the cuckoo!' Crying 'Rama! Rama!' and again 'Rama!' and yet again 'Rama, Rama!' and 'Rama!', the king, parted from Raghubir, abandoned his body and entered the abode of the gods."[28]

It may be stated here that about the picture of Ravana's lament at the death of Kumbhakarna, Tulasidas has only stated—

> "Grievous were the lamentations of the Ten-headed as time and again he pressed his brother's head to his heart."[29]

So also about the picture of Dasharatha's condition afte hearing of the departure of Rama into the forest, Kambar state, in a lime:

> "When the charioteer said 'Rama has left for the forest with brother and Sita,' the life of the king also left his body instantaneously."[30]

Kambar brings the sudden death of the king with no details, thereby adopting a unique technique for 'Pathos!'

3. *Heroism*:

Kambar: Hanuman sees the death of Maya Sita at the hands of Indrajit. Lamenting he comes and tells Rama, Lakshmana, Vanaras and all of his camp. Rama loses control over

28. *Ibid.*, (2-155 to 2-156).
29. *Ibid.*, (6-94-2).
30. Kamba Ramayanam (2-5-60).

himself and falls down as dead. Lakshmana too sinks in grief but gains courage soon. When Rama is also aroused from his unconsciousness, Lakshmana appealing to Rama not to get dejected addresses him in thundering terms:

"When fate her darkest hour unrolls, and all
Appears lost, 'tis only weaklings lose
Their heart and hopeless sink in black despair
But wilt thou be like them? When tarnished is
Our race itself by this irreparable loss,
Why slacks thy arm from ending all the worlds
A woman weak, a helpless one, of life
Austere, and she thy spouse, as Lakshmi fair:
If her the Rakshas kills and thou art still
Engulfed in sorrow, thy rage unroused, I ask,
Is life so dear? Or dost thou pity fed
For men and gods? What hast thou now to do
With Dharma itself? What care we now for gods
Or Rakshasas, for Gurus, Brahmans, Ved
Itself? When violence prospers in the world
And Righteousness in ruin ends, why sit
We here with folded arms? Why hesitate
To end the triple worlds with fire and sword
Behold, the worlds are still revolving on
In their appointed spheres; the gods are still
Alive, and men are bowing yet to Dharm
As if it still exists! And clouds yet yield
Their plenteous rain to man! And bent with grief
We sit and weep and rise not to end them all!
Is not our valour great? Our duty was
If we but knew, to burn this city vile,
And scattering fire around, to line with flames
The roads, all through, that Indrajitta passed,
And send him to his doom."[31]

Tulasi: As the incident of 'killing false Sita' is not in Tulasi, we shall take another situation which is not found in Kamba Ramayanam. According to Tulasi, when Janaka states in the open Swayamvara that there is no warrior truly brave on the

31. *Ibid.*, (6-25-65 to 69).

face of the earth, Lakshmana loses himself. Lakshmana gets terribly angry at the words of Janaka and bowing to Rama states in a fiery tone:

> "In an assembly where any one of the house of Raghu is present, no one may utter such rude words as Janak has uttered, though he knows that the Jewel of the Raghu race is here. Hearken, sun of the lotus Solar race, I speak sincerely and in no boasting spirit; give me leave and I will lift the universe like a ball and smash it like an unbaked earthen jar! I can break Mount Meru like a radish: And what, blessed Lord, is this rotten old bow to the greatness of your sovereign might? So, Lord, bid me and I'll show you some sport; just watch me and I'll lift the bow like a lotus stalk and run off with it a hundred thousand miles! In the strength of your glorious power, O Lord, I'll break it like a mushroom stem; and if I don't, I swear by my Lord's feet I'll never take bow and quiver in hand again."[32]

4. *Humour:*

Kambar: With an idea to marry Rama, Shoorpanakha approaches him in an exquisitely beautiful form, but like a 'daughter of deceipt'. After both knowing who is who, she begins speaking in words full of honey. The Poet says:

> " 'I knew not until now that thou
> Were here: and so my time and youth were lost
> In service done to hermits deemed wise!
> Quoth Ram, 'The Shastras do such unions
> Condemn as thou desirest: For thou com'st
> Of Brahmin stock, and I am Kshatriya born.'
> 'If this is all thou urg'st,' said Shoorpanakha
> 'I die not yet; for thou my father was
> Brahman, mother was a Rakshasa queen'.
> He heard the lustful rakshasi: the shade
> Of a budding smile suffused his lotus lips
> While thus he spoke: 'The wise declare that men
> Should not damsel wed of Rakshas birth.'

32. Ram Charit Manas (1-256-1 to Doha 256).

'What fool I was to say', thought Shurp'nakha,
'That I was Ravana's sister!' Then aloud
Quoth she, 'As fruit of great austerities
I have my shameful Rakshas birth cast off,
And God has blessed me with this comely form.'
To her, thus He whom Vedas themselves find
For e'er to be beyond their utmost depth:
'If thou are sister to the sovereign,
As thou dost say, of all the worlds, and if
Thy other brother is Kuber, afraid
Am I to marry thee unless they give
Thee 'way in solemn form!' 'But know'st not thou,'
Persisted she, 'Gandharva rites are fixed
For those like us whom mutual love has joined?
When thus our love is sanctified, my brothers
Will gladly welcome thee. Now they make war
On holy men; and full of sin and rage
Are they; unaided thou shouldst not approach
To where they are. When I shall make thee king
Of earth and heaven, then will they come and serve
And clasp thy lotus feet.' Ram laughed aloud,
And said, 'with thee as wife, and Rakshas hosts
As friends, with all the endless wealth that comes
To me with thee, am I not blest indeed?' "[33]

Tulasi: For an example of humour in Tulasi, we shall take that incident of Parashurama's arrival immediately after the breaking of the Shiva's bow by Rama. With immeasurable anger Parashurama asked for that man to come out who broke the bow lest all the kings should be killed. Now the Poet says:

"When Lakshmana heard the sage's threat, he smiled and spoke contemptuously to the Bearer of the Axe: 'Many a little bow have I broken when a boy, but you, sir, were never as angry as this. Why are you so fond of this bow?' "[34]

"Said Lakshmana with a laugh, 'Listen, divine sage! In my opinion all bows are alike. What does the breaking

33. Kamba Ramayanam (3-5-48 to 56).
34. Ram Charit Manas (1-304-3, 4).

of a rotten old bow matter one way or the other? Rama mistook it for a new one; no sooner did he touch it than it broke. It wasn't Raghupati's fault; then, sage, why are you unreasonably angry?' "[35]

Now Parashurama threatens to kill him with his axe. The poet continues :

"Lakshmana smiled as he gently replied, 'Aha, lord of sages, very confident are you in your prowess! You keep on showing me your axe; you want to blow away a mountain with a puff! But I'm not a weak little gourd that fades away at the sight of a finger. When I saw your axe and bow and arrows, perhaps I spoke a little arrogantly; but now that I realize that you are of the Brighu line and mark your sacred thread, I will bear good-temperedly anything you say. In our family there is no display of valour against gods or brahmins or votaries of cows; for to slay them is a sin and to suffer defeat at their hands is dishonour. So though you strike me, I must fall at your feet. Your every word is like ten million thunderbolts; needless for you to carry bow and arrows and axe'! If when I saw your weapons I may have said aught improper, pardon me, O great and patient sage'."[36]

Parashurama gets more infuriated and asks Vishwamitra to calm him stating of his prowess, might and fury. Hearing his words Lakshmana says again :

"O sage who else can tell of your fair renown while you still live to tell it? With your own lips have you told me of your own exploits time and again in many ways, and if you are not statisfied, tell them all over again. Endure not pain unendurable by checking your wrath. You are resolute and dauntless and sworn to valour, and you can win no glory by pouring out abuse. Heroes perform deeds of valour on the field but do not themselves make them known. It is cowards who brag

35. *Ibid.*, (1-305-1, 2).
36. *Ibid.*, (1-306-1 to 4 and Doha 306).

of their prowess when they find themselves confronted with a foe. You're repeatedly crying and calling on death to deal with me!"[37]

Now Parashurama takes the axe in hand and makes it ready but Vishwamitra begs of him to excuse Lakshmana, for he is only a child. Parashurama excuses him only out of consideration for Vishwamitra, telling him that, but for him, he would have killed him and thus paid his guru his due. Lakshmana again says:

"Sage, who does not know your honourable character? The whole world recognizes it. You have well discharged your obligations to your father and mother; remains only the debt you owe to your guru, and now you're worrying about that. Now you've, as it were, made me responsible for it and after all this time the interest has mounted up; so send for your businessman and I'll open my purse and pay up straight away."[38]

Now Parashurama gets extremely furious and Rama calms him down. Lakshmana looks at the sage again and again smiling and finally begins advising with a smile:

"Hearken, sage, wrath is the root of sin; it drives men on to do unworthy deeds and fight against the world. I am your servant, king of sages; now cease from anger and show mercy. Wrath will not mend the broken bow. Pray take a rest. Your feet must be aching. If you are so fond of the bow, do something about it; send for some cunning craftsman and have it mended."[39]

It may be incidentally noted that Kambar has avoided this humorous setting of Lakshmana's dialogue with Parashurama, and Tulasidas treats mildly the humour of Rama towards Shoorpanakha.

37. *Ibid.*, (1-307-3 to 1-308-1).

38. *Ibid.*, (1-309-1,2).

39. *Ibid.*, (1-310 to 1-311-2).

5. *Anger :*

Kambar : The grant of the two boons to Kaikeyi and the consequent lot of Rama enrages Lakshmana more than any one else. The poet depicts his anger as follows :

> "When Lakshmana learnt that Keikeyi had the pledge
> Revoked of Dasharatha, and forced exile
> On Ram, he rose indignant like the fire
> That doth on Dissolution's day all things
> Consume. His eyes shot flame; his front shone bright
> Like noon-day sun, and scorched his very hair;
> And sweat suffised his limbs; his breath came in
> And went tempestously; and terrific
> He looked like Adisesh himself, in all
> His fury roused!"[40]

He then laughs boisterously, and puts on all his arms including the bow and the quiver and anklet. He goes out to the streets of Ayodhya in long strides and cries to the people challenging all forces including 'gods, nagas, vidyadhras, men or even the Three supreme'—

> "* * * * I let no woman
> Usurp the throne in this my sacred land."[41]

He goes along the roads of Ayodhya 'like the very Meru mountain endowed with life, frowning on all around even as the burning midday sun'.[42]

Now comes Rama like the 'pictorial lotus' on hearing the news and goes briskly to Lakshmana seeing his angry posture as—

> "* * * * The cloud
> To quench the wind-fanned flaming forest fire
> Fume-crowned."[43]

40. Kamba Ramayanam (2-4-115, 116).
41. *Ibid*, (2-4-122).
42. 'Kamba Ramayanam-A Study'—V. V. S. Aiyar, p. 72.
43. Kamba Ramayanam (2-4-125).

Rama seeing Lakshmana 'frowning against all living', asks him, "why art thou armed for battle my child? Surely thou art not going to fight the gods!"[44] Rama tries to explain to Lakshmana the philosophy behind things and states—

> "They blame not streams if water sometimes fails; blame thou not then our king, nor her our mother: 'Tis fate that drives us an, my brother!, Why then this rage?' "[45]

But Lakshmana finds no consolation whatsoever in it and replies at Rama's very face—

> "I have vowed to crown thee king, and that in the very face of her who has murdered truth and robbed thee of thy rightful inheritance. And even if it is the gods that stand in the way, they all shall burn in the fire of my wrath. When I behold the bow in this hand, even the gods will not dare to oppose me. If any oppose, they will be but targets for my fiery darts. And I will give thee the crown of all the earth! Design to receive it at my hands."[46]

Rebutting his theory of fate, Lakshmana tells Rama with all seriousness and rage, that Rama may see the work of his bow which will prove to be the 'fate' to fate itself. His anger reaches its zenith.

Tulasi: In Tulasi, Lakshmana's anger is not depicted when he hears of the boons got by Kaikeyi. We shall see anger in another situation in Parasurama.

When the bow of Shiva is broken by Rama, Parasurama hears the sound and comes to the spot terrifying all the kings assembled there. His fair face turns red due to anger. His eyebrows get curved, eyes turn red with a look of anger on the countenance. He sees the broken bow on the ground. Now the poet says:

> "In a furious passion he cried aloud, 'Tell me, Janaka, you fool, who has broken the bow? Point him out

44. *Ibid.*, (2-4-126).
45. *Ibid.*, (2-4-134).
46. *Ibid.*, (2-4-135).

immediately, you dotard, or here and now I'll overthrow your realm as far as your sovereignty extends!"[47]

Seeing all terrified, Rama tells him with all humility that he must be but one of his servants, asking for his orders. But the angry sage says in rage, "A servant is one who serves, but one who acts like an enemy must be fought. Hear me, Rama! Whoever broke the bow of Shiva is as much my enemy as Sahasrabahu! Let him come forth alone from amidst the assembly or else all the kings will be destroyed!"[48]

Now interferes Lakshmana and talks to him in a light hearted manner. The sage gets extremely furious and tells Vishwamitra:

"Hear me, Vishwamitra! This child is mad and perverse, doomed to death himself and the ruin of his house, a stain on the full moon of the Solar race, utterly uncontrolled, demented and reckless! Another moment and he shall be a morsel in the jaws of death, and I loudly assert that I shall not be to blame! Check him, if you would save him, by the recital of my prowess, my might and my fury!"[49]

6. *Fear :*

Kambar: Ravana is seated on his throne with a mighty stature as a hill, with the ear-rings like suns, with a chest containing ornaments and so strong as to directly attack the tusks of the elephants with upright ten heads like 'Adishesha' serpent, with a huge heap of flowers at his feet offered by gods and kings. Now the poet says :

"In the court are gods, kings and his own counsellors with reverence and apprehension. Vidyadhara kings stand with folded hands raised over their diademed heads throughout not knowing when the glance of Ravana will shift to their side, fearing that they would incur his displeasure should he find them at the moment of his glance

47. Ram Charit Manas (1-303-2).
48. *Ibid.*, (1-304-2, 3).
49. *Ibid.*, (1-307-1, 2) .

not in a duly respectful posture. Even the mighty siddhas gathered there are so apprehensive that his mere asking the hand-maids standing beside, makes their heads bow down, hands clasp and shrink their hearts with fear. The Kinnaras stand trembling, and think of even the good words uttered by Ravana to his counsellors as a command to them for a certain serious work."[50]

Tulasi: Angada enters Lanka as ambassador of Rama to Ravana and kills the demon-prince. He is on his way to meet the demon king and inform the message. The demons then see him coming. Now the poet says:

"When they saw the mighty warrior, the demon host ran this way and that; they would not even cry aloud. One betrayed, not the matter to another; they kept silence when they saw the demon prince was dead. But an uproar arose in the city; 'The monkey has come who set Lanka on Fire!' Terrified, they all began to wonder what God was going to do next. Unasked they showed him the way; did he but look at any, that demon's blood ran cold."[51]

7. *Disgust:*

Kambar: Describing the battle-field at Lanka the poet say·

"Elephants and horses rolled down on the ground, their blood running in streams to the ocean, chariots were broken to pieces and Rakshasa heads were pilled one over another like mountain boulders. The vanaras fell thousands and tens of thousands, and their bodies floated down to the sea in the very stream formed of their blood."[52]

"The battle-field became veritable shambles; the spirits who live on corpses danced for joy; rivers of blood were flowing inexhaustible, carrying the severed heads, trunks and bodies of elephants and horses and men."[53]

50. Kamba Ramayanam (3-7-8, 9, 10). 'Ravana Darbar'—G. Ethirajulu Naidu, (An essay in Tamil-manuscript).
51. Ram Charit Manas (6-27-3, 4, 5).
52. Kamba Ramayanam (6-14-50, 61, 62).
53. *Ibid.*, (6-14-233).

Tulasi: The same scene of the battle-field at Lanka is described by Tulasidas as well, wherein he states:

> "River of blood flowed forth like torrents down a hill, striking terror into coward hearts. A terror to the cowards were the rivers of blood that flooded forth in impure streams and flowed on horribly. * * * Warriors fell like trees upon the banks; the marrow of their bones oozed out in quantities like foam. Cowards trembled at the sight; the brave were glad. Ghost, goblins and vampires bathed in the stream, and dreadful fiends with masses of tangled hair; crows and kites flew off with arms, seized them from one another and devoured them. Some cried, 'You fools! Haven't you got enough already with such abundance?' Wounded warriors fell on the bank and groaned as though they were lying strewn about half in the water. Vultures pulled out entrails as if they were earnestly angling for fish on the bank of a river. Numbers of warriors floated down the stream, and birds alighted on them as if they were sporting on river boats. Witches collected skulls and filled them; the wives of ghosts and goblins danced in the sky, while grim goddesses clashed heroes' skulls as castanets and sang all kinds of songs. Heads of jackals snapped and chattered; they ate, they howled, they stuffed themselves full and threatened one another. Myriads of headless trunks were on the move, and heads lay on the ground and shouted, 'Victory! Victory!"[54]

8. *Wonder* :

Kambar: Very many kings had failed in even lifting the Shiva's bow. Vishwamitra with Rama and Lakshmana reaches the place. Rama is to try it. People begin taking about the cruelty of Janaka in insisting on the condition before marrying Sita to

54. Ram Charit Manas (6-112-5 to 6-113-5).

Rama. For it would be only a wonder if he breaks it. Now the poet says:

"While thus fair anxious hearts spoke,
The prince strode towards the bow
With steps stately and proud at sight of which
The maned lion and the bull in its prime
The golden Meru and the elephant
Stood all abashed.
Lightly he raised the mountainous golden bulk
That was the bow,
As though it were a garland
Woven of fresh flowers
His offering to fair Sita
Unwinking they watched.
Still no one knew how the bow was planted
Firm against the foot,
Or how the string was drawn
The bow was lifted, that they saw,
They heard the crash of its breaking.
The gods rained flowers
And the clouds a golden shower
The wide seas rose in loud acclaim
Scattering gems."[55]

Tulasi: The scene is the same. In Tulasi even Ravana and Banasura had failed in the attempt. Rama is to try it. Now the poet states:

"Doing mental obeisance to his guru, he took up the bow with the utmost ease; it gleamed like a flash of lightning when he grasped it, and again became like the rounded vault of heaven. All stood watching, but none could see him grasp it, raise it and draw it tight. In that moment Rama broke the bow in half, and the dread, harsh crash resounded through the worlds. So dread, so harsh a crash resounded through the worlds that the sun's horses left their path and strayed, the elephants of the quarters trumpeted, earth shook and the serpent, the boor and tortoise floundered in disquite. Gods,

55. Kamba Ramayanam (1-12-32, 33, 34)—Trn. from 'Leaves from Kamban' Prof. A. Srinivasa Raghavan, pp. 19, 20.

demons and sages all stopped their ears with their hands in an anxious wonder; but when they heard that Rama had broken the bow, they uttered cries of triumph."[56]

9. *Peace :*

Kambar : Describing the river Sarayu the poet says :

"White as the Lord wearing the sacred ash,
The cloud went
To the sounding pastures of the sea
And came back
Dark as the Lord
He who wears as his strength
Her, the sandal-covered one
Goddess of wealth and beauty."[57]

"Mountains born, merging in the sea,
One in its origin, ultimately one,
The river spread over the land
In many a fork and tank and pool,
Even as the one Truth, the Transcendent,
Shines in various names and forms
When great faiths speak of the Ineffable,
Each one in its way."[58]

Tulasi : Describing Rama with Sita and Lakshmana in the forest hut, the poet says:

"With Sita and his brother the Lord dwelt glorious in his hut of leaves, like Faith and Wisdom and Detachment in bodily form."[59]

So also the poet describes the presence of Sita and Rama in the midst of sages as follows :

"In the midst of the glorious circle of hermits, Sita and Raghucanda (Rama) shone forth like Faith and the Absolute incarnate in the council-hall of Knowledge."[60]

Thus we see that both are master-artists in picturising all the human sentiments (Nava Rasa) with exquisite poetic flavour.

56. Ram Charit Manas (1-294-3, 4 and Chand).
57. Kamba Ramayanam (1-1-2) Trn. from 'Leaves from Kamban' Prof. A. Srinivasa Raghavan, pp. 1, 2.
58. *Ibid.*, (1-1-19).
59. Ram Charit Manas (2-322).
60. *Ibid.*, (2-240).

II—LANGUAGE AND METRE.

Poetry is said to be the 'magical ordering of words'. Poetry, in its asthetic sense, is not the thing said, but it is the 'way of saying' it. This 'way of saying' creates the magic in the heart of the reader. This 'way of saying' is styled by the choice words which are not labourborn, but self-offerings of the words themselves to the poet and come to him on his spontaneous desire to create poetry. Shoorpanakha surprisingly says in Kamba Ramayanam that 'the quiver of Rama is an unfinishing reservoir of shafts and offers themselves to Rama like the words from the heart of a poet'. A great poet has a vast and deep ocean of words, and any word of that ocean is readily available to him as and when needed.

Poetry is a fountain and not a machinery. As has been said by Arabindo, poet is he who has a 'large and powerful interpretatory vision of life and nature and man.' Poet pours out through his world of words his own mind based on his 'large and powerful interpretatory vision of life and nature and man.' His pourings take the shape of a spontaneous stream and make the reader reach the unfathomable regions of poetry. Kambar states that Rama, Sita and Lakshmana 'saw the river Godavari which was resembling the Poem of a poet'.[61]

It may at once be stated that both of our master-poets—Kambar and Tulasidas — are capable of setting words — which come to both by themselves—in 'the magical ordering'. Kamba Ramayanam and Tulasi Ramayan are the two extensive and deep spontaneous streams — one in Tamil, the Dravidian language, and the other in Avadhi, a dialect of the Indo-Aryan Hindi in the broader sense — overflown spontaneously for self-satisfaction from the hearts of the two great poets. Both had the unique advantage of the blissful service of the choicest words to bring out the most appropriate meaning, and the 'large and powerful interpretatory vision of life and nature and man'.

The 'magical ordering' depends primarily on two main factors — (1) Language and (2) Metre. Language is the general medium for the expression of ideas, and the metre is the system,

61. Kamba Ramayanam (3-5-1).

the symmetry, the harmony of the words, adopted for capturing the imagination of the reader and to have an easy approach and grasp. As in music, 'Language' is the tune and 'Metre' is the time.

1. *Language*: Kamba Ramayanam is in the classical twelfth (or ninth) century Tamil and Kambar has made the Tamil language itself more dignified than it was before his period.

To this medium the poet has added lucidity of expression, arrangement of diction, apt phrases and clauses and also a moulding to set his own metrical composition in 'Viruttappa'. While being complete according to the rules of grammar, it is easily captivating; while being very simple it is extremely suggestive and while being new to its time, it reflects the ancient traditions of Tamil, and inspires the reader with the richness of classical diction. Kambar has for his language a very great ocean of Sangam Literature including Tolkappiam, Tirukkural, etc., all the ancient epics like Silappadiharam, Manimeihalai, and particularly Jeevaka Chintamani, works of Nayanmars and Alwars, i.e., Tevaram, Tiruvasaham and Nalayirapprabandam and a numberless other works, big and small. Kamgar's language is fashioned with this as the background and has reached greater heights in diction. His language is a superstructure over his earlier and contemporary writers. In the words of Dr. R. P. Sethu Pillai, Kambar's language has 'a high, melodious, polished and learned diction'. The combinations of his words create such a magical charm as to produce a musical effect when read in the metrical order, which, according to Kambar, is an indispensable factor.[62]

It may however be stated that Kambar, because of his high and rich diction, can appeal to and be understood by only that section of people well-educated in Tamil, and not by the uneducated masses. Hence, though he may not be classified as a popular poet, he does become a popular poet, when the beauties of the words and their meanings in their proper settings are elucidated to them.

Tulasi Ramayan is in the sixteenth century Avadhi—a branch of Ardha-Magadhi Indo-Aryan—which is taken to be a dialect of Hindi in the broader sense. The poet Tulasidas did not have a perfect medium for himself at his time. In the earlier literature, it was

62. Kamba Ramayaanm (6-15-22).

only in a raw and unpolished state. It was Malik Muhammed Jayasi who had successfully adopted the Avadhi dialect earlier for his monumental classic 'Padmavat' with a view to propagate his ideals and principles of Sufism in India. Language of Padmavat is also Avadhi, but it has not undergone the polish that is necessary for a language of a great classic and remains the same as heard from the uneducated masses. It was for Tulasi to adopt that very language for his great epic of Ramayana and give a new diction and colour to it. Truly speaking, Tulasidas created a new language for himself to bring out his *magnum opus* from the very raw material found in his time. This he achieved by his own poetic faculties and set the Avadhi words in a magical ordering. Tulasidas took much interest in bringing out his epic in Avadhi itself, because it is the language of the land of Rama, and not the Braj Bhasha which is the language spoken in the land of Krishna, though the latter was readily available to him and he also composed enormously in Braj Bhasha. Earlier, Surdas, the blind poet, the Milton of Hindi Literature—had already brought out his songs on Sri Krishna in a lucid and literary Braj Bhasha.

The language of Tulasi Ramayan has absorbed a pretty number of Sanskrit, Arabic and Persian[63] words too in its diction, as they had all got mingled in the spoken language of the people in general. He names his language as 'Bhasha'[64] and 'language of the village' (Gramya gira)[65] and uses the same language knowing fully well that to compose poetry in that language was being laughed at[66], and that he may not also get due respect for his composition of the epic. But with all this background he has risen very high and, his appeal has been so vast that educated and uneducated alike have shown great reverence and appreciation for his epic in Avadhi. This is the first attempt of its type so far as Ramayana in Avadhi language is concerned. It has, however, an admixture of Bundelkhandi, Braj Bhasha and Bhojpuri dialects.[67]

63. A list of 98 Arabic and Persian words used in Tulasi Ramayan is offered by Ram Naresh Tripathi in his 'Tulasidas aur Unka Kavya', pp. 251-254.

64. Ram Charit Manas (1-18-2).

65. *Ibid.*, (1-20).

66. *Ibid.*, (1-18-2).

67. 'Tulasidas aur Unka Kavya' p. 267, Ram Naresh Tripathi.

The language of Tulasi Ramayan is also captivating and suggestive though creating a new classical diction of its own. According to Dr. Mata Prasad Gupta, the salient qualities of his language lie in its lucidity, simplicity, beauty, flow and suggestiveness.[68]

Comparing the language of both these master-poets of Ramayana, it can well be stated that while Kambar was a discoverer of heights greater than those already found in Tamil, Tulasidas was an inventor of a classical literary Avadhi, new to its world.

We shall now see how both the poets adopt their vehicles of expression for reflecting various modes of thoughts—

(a) When Shoorpanakha with a beautiful form and extreme passion approaches Rama to captivate him, Kambar describes it in the following lilting verse—

"பஞ்சி யொளிர் விஞ்சுகுளிர் பல்லவ மனுங்கச்
செஞ்செவிய கஞ்சநிமிர் சீறடிய ளாகி
அஞ்சொலிள மஞ்ஞையென அன்னமென மின்னும்
வஞ்சியென நஞ்சமென வஞ்சமகள் வந்தாள்."
/3-5-31/

The same technique has been adopted by Tulasidas when he describes the arrival of Sita in *Pushpabatika*, the flower garden of Janaka, in Mithila while Rama with Lakshmana had been there to pluck flowers for performing *pooja*. The poet describing the first stage of the prematrimonial love of Rama and Sita says—

"कंकन - किंकिनि - नूपुर - धुनि सुनि ।
कहत लषन सन रामु हृदय गुनि ॥
मानहुँ मदन दुंदुभी दीन्ही ।
मनसा विस्व विजय कहँ कीन्ही ॥
/ 1 - 263 - 1 /

Use of apt nasal consonants with alliteration is remarkable in both, and the echoing sound itself explicitly manifests the sense of love.

68. 'Tulasidas'—Mata Prasad Gupta, p. 373.

(b) Kambar describes the fierceness of the demoness Tataka while arriving as follows:

> " இறைக்கடை துடித்தபுரு வத்தளெயி றென்றும்
> பிறைக்கடை பிறக்கிட மடித்தபில வாயாள்
> மறைக்கடை யரக்கிவட வைக்கன லிரண்டாய்
> நிறைக்கடல் முளைத்தென நெருப்பெழ விழித்தாள். "
>
> /1-7-49/

Tulasidas describes the fight of Rama with the army of Khara at Panchavati as follows:

> " चिक्करत लागत बान । धर परत कु - धर - समान ॥
> भट कटत तन सतखंड । पुनि उठत करि पाखंड ॥
> नभ उड़त बहु भुज मुंड । बिनु मौलि धावत रुंड ॥
> खग कंक काक सृगाल । कटकटहिं कठिन कराल ॥
>
> / 3 - 24 - तोमर छंद 5, 6 /

Use of hard consonants with appropriate alliteration is noteworthy in both. The very sound brings before the reader or hearer a picture of the matter described.

(c) Kambar expresses the angry words of Ravana in the following language:

> " உற்றக லாமுன்
> கற்ற குரங்கை
> பற்றுமி னென்றான்
> முற்று முனிந்தான். "
>
> /5-14-48/

Tulasidas expresses the anger of Lakshmana as follows :

> " माखे लखन कुटिल भइँ भौंहें ।
> रदपट फरकत नयन रिसौंहें ॥ "
>
> / 1 - 285 - 4 /

Use of hard consonants here is extremely impressive. The reverberating sound of words automatically makes one feel the sentiment behind in both.

From the preceding citations it is evident that both the master-poets have so chiselled their diction that the chosen words present beautiful pictures of their 'sounds echoing sense',[69] i.e., onomatopoeic.

(d) To express a certain sentiment deeply, both the poets are found to adopt a specific technique of using various words depicting the same meaning in various shades, and thereby carry the sentiment direct to the heart of the reader.

When Indrajit throws the Brahmastra on Lakshmana, he falls on the ground unconscious, seeing which Rama also gets immersed in the ocean of distress. Now on the orders of Ravana, Sita is brought to the battle-field. She sees Rama and Lakshmana fallen on the battle-field, and thinks that they are dead. Now, poet Kambar gives a picture of his Sita as follows :

"விழுந்தாள் புரண்டா ளுடன்முழுதும் வியர்த்தா
ளயர்த்தாள் வெதும்பினாள்,
எழுந்தா ளிருந்தாண் மலர்க்கரத்தை நெரித்தாள்
சிரித்தா ளேங்கினாள்,
கொழுந்தா வென்றா ளயோத்தியர்தங் கோவே
யென்றா ளெவ்வுலகும்,
தொழுந்தா ளரசே யோவென்றாள் சோர்ந்தா
ளரற்றத் தொடங்கினாள்."
/6-22-9/

In Tulasi Ramayan, when Ravana hears that the sea is bridged, he feel extremely wonder-struck. The poet expresses his words in the following language :

"बाँधेउ बननिधि नीरनिधि,
जलधि सिंधु बारीस ।
सत्य तोयनिधि कंपती,
उदधि पयोधि नदीस ॥
/ 6 - 8 /

69. It is Pope, the famous English poet and critic, who said that in poetry 'sound must echo the sense'.

(e) Both the poets reflect the quickness of action through their language by the setting of apt fast flowing words which by themselves suggest the purport of the matter described.

Rama breaks the bow in no time. Kambar says —

"எடுத்தது கண்டனர் இற்றது கேட்டார்."

/1-12-34/

Similarly Tulasi states —

"लेत चढ़ावत खैंचत गाढ़े ।
काहु न लखा देख सब ठाढ़े ॥

/ 1 - 294 - 4 /

Again —

about the destruction of the entire army of Khara by Rama, Kambar states through the mouth of Shoorpanakha to Ravana —

"வில்லொன்றிற் கடிகை மூன்றிலேறினர் விண்ணிலென்றாள்."

/3-7-64/

So also, Tulasidas states about the same incident —

"प्रभु निमिष महुँ रिपुसर निवारि
प्रचारि डारे सायका ।
दस दस बिसिख उर माँझ मारे
सकल निसि-चर-नायका ॥

/ 3 - 24 छंद 3 /

2. *Metre*:

Kambar had before him the free verse of the Silappadiharam, and the metrical stanza style of Jivaha Chintamani. He chose the latter for his Kamba Ramayanam and raised it to such a perfection that it has given rise to a proverb in Tamil in his appreciation, which means 'Kambar is the highest in Viruttam', viruttam indicating the above metrical stanza style.

The broad classification of Viruttam is under four divisions, viz.—

(i) Veli Viruttam
(ii) Achiriya Viruttam
(iii) Kali Viruttam and
(iv) Vanji Viruttam

Kambar has greatly used the Achiriya Viruttam, and others in a lesser measure. One literary critic has stated that Kambar has, in all, used Ninty-six types of material compositions in his immortal epic. If we, for example, take the Viruttam with six 'seers' (i.e., poetic syllabic units according to Tamil Prosody), Kambar has used not less than five types.[70] The change in meter is only according to the situation and the sentiment to be reflected and not to deliberately exhibit the talents. Wherever a change in metre occurs, it is with a purpose behind, and the words together with the apt spontaneous flow of the metre automatically reflect the sentiment behind the occasion.[71] However, he has also expressed divergent sentiments with the same metre by adopting dissimilar types of consonants and vowels too. The preceding examples under (a) and (b) of 'Language' of Kambar give ample proof for the same, as they both are in the same metre.

Hereunder two samples are offered to show the talent of Kambar and his metrical extremities in adopting metres suitable for the occasion—

(a) Mandodari comes wailing and falls on the dead body of her husband. Kambar describes her lamentation :

" வெள்ளெருக்கஞ் சடைமுடியான் வெற்பெடுத்த
திருமேனி மேலுங் கீழும்
எள்ளிரிக்கு மிடமின்றி யுயிரிருக்கு மிடநாடி
யிழைத்த வாறோ,
கள்ளிருக்கு மலர்க்கூந்தற் சானகியை மனச்சிறையிற்
கரந்த காதல்,
உள்ளிருக்கு மெனக்கருதி யுடல்புகுந்து தடவியதோ
வொருவன் வாளி."

/6-36-239/

(b) On hearing about the burning of Lanka by Hanuman, Ravana asks his warriors in rage to bring him bound. Kambar says :

" உற்றக லாமுன்
கற்ற குரங்கைப்
பற்றுமி னென்றான்
முற்று முனிந்தான்."

/5-14-48/

70. 'Kamban Kaviyam'—Prof. S. Vaiyapuri Pillai, p. 130.
71. 'Kambar'—Prof. T. Chelvakesavaroya Mudaliar, p. 73.

Here the first metre has been used to express the sobbing Mandodari in slow and pausing flow with long lines, whereas the second metre is short and brisk-moving to depict the extreme anxiety of Ravana to have Hanuman caught before he runs away.

Tulasi : To suit the subject matter, the form and the language selected, Tulasidas adopted the Doha-Chaupayi style of 'Padmavat' by Malik Muhammad Jayasi, and improved upon the manner to 'reach its apogee',[72] as he did in the case of the language. He normally wrote four complete chaupayies and ended it with a doha, according to the rules of prosody. As the poet selected the 'Bhasha' i.e., the Avadhi language for his medium, he also selected an indigenous metre of Avadhi itself and not any of the Sanskrit prosody. However he has begun all the seven Kandas with a few Sanskrit verses. Besides Doha and Chaupayi metres, Tulasidas has used the following metres[73] also, but in a negligible measure.

Matric : (based on 'matra' or time): Soratha, Tomar, Harigeetika, Chappaya, Tribhangi.

Varnik: (based on 'varna' or letters): Anushthup, Ratoddhata, Sragdhara, Malini, Totak, Vanshastha, Bhujangaprayat, Nagaswaroopini, Basant-tilaka, Indravajra, Shardoolvikreedit.

Excluding these eighteen, Dr. Rajpati Deekshit adds another metre 'Pramanika'[74] and totals the types of metres used by Tulasidas in has Ram Charit Manas as nineteen.[75] The poet has used the meters other than Doha and Chaupayi only for invocations or description of war, or his own prayers and obeisances in the beginning of each kanda. He has had his free discretion in selecting the different types of metre, and not necessarily to reflect a particular sentiment, and change of situation in the story. The complete story is related in Chaupayi and a mild pause is offered by a doha after every four or at times a few more chaupayis.

72. 'A History of Hindi Literature'—K. B. Jindal, p. 77.
73. 'Hindi Sahitya Ka Alochanatmak Itihas'—Dr. Ram Kumar Verma, p. 605.
74. 'Tulasidas aur Unka Uga'—Dr. Rajpati Deekshit, pp. 372, 376.
75. It may however be stated that the total number of the types of metres used by Tulasidas in all his works is 25. (Tulasidas aur Unka Kavya' Ram Naresh Tripathi, p. 309).

Now, two examples are given to depict the metrical variations of Tulasidas : ,

(a) Tulasidas describes the salvation of Ahalya in the following Savaiya chand:

"परसत पदपावन सोक नसावन प्रगट भई तपपुंज सही ।
देखत रघुनायक जन-सुख-दायक सनमुख होइ कर जोरि रही ॥
अति प्रेम अधीरा पुलक सरीरा मुख नहिं आवइ बचन कही ।
अतिसय बड़भागी चरनन्हि लागी जुगल नयन जलधार बही ॥
/ 1 - 244 - छंद 1 /

(b) The following is the prayer of Indra to Rama in Tomar chand:

"बैदेहि अनुज समेत । मम हृदय करहु निकेत ॥
मोहि जानिये निज दास । दे भगति रमा निवास ॥
/ 6 - 140 - तोमर छंद 8 /

Thus we see that both the poets are bestowed with the great qualities of 'Language and metre'. Of Kambar, Prof. S. Vaiyapuri Pillai says — "Kambar's instinct for the right word, his suggestiveness, his concentrated style and the technique of his poetry are remarkable. * * * He has handled a vast variety of metrical forms with extraordinary skill, changing them to suit the themes. For rapid narration, he chooses metres which carry us on their wings quickly and pleasantly."[76]

Mr. Greaves, speaking about Tulasidas says, "Grammar and construction and the forms of words are as subservient to him as are slaves to the commands of their Lord. He takes words and shortens and lengthens them, he twists and turns them; they do his bidding and assume the shape he commands, fitting in just where they are needed and yet without loss of dignity or self-respect."[77]

76. 'Kamban Kaviyam' —Prof. S. Vaiyapuri Pillai, pp. 155, 156.

77. 'A Sketch of Hindi Literature'—Greaves (See 'A History of Hindi Literature' by K. B. Jindal, p. 77).

III. CASTEISM

The basic difference between Kamba Ramayanam and Tulasi Ramayan is that the former is more of a literary work than a religious one, while the latter is more of a religious work than a literary epic. Kambar has remoulded the well-known Ramayana story in Tamil language infusing in it a Tamil spirit throughout and casting it according to the traditions of Tamil literature and culture. While Kambar's intention was to present an old story befitting the genius of the Tamil society, his special achievement lies in having given a '*magnum opus*' of the greatest of literary heights. Kambar has, throughout his epic, either avoided or changed all those scenes and situations which he considered to be against his sociological concepts, and has also incorporated certain new settings. His criterion of judging the people is the measure of adherence to righteousness, and not the caste or birth considerations. His sociological concept is based on an ideal brotherhood! Rama himself tells Vibhishana:

> "When Guha joined us on Ganga's banks,
> I counted myself blessed with brothers four:
> Sugriva to me a fifth did add; and now
> With thee we are become sev'n loving brothers.
> Blest verily is father Dasharatha;
> But sons on sons do grow on him and bless
> His royal name."[78]

It is not the men-folk alone in Kambar but the women-folk also look with the same view of brotherhood, so much so that Sita is introduced to Guha as his sister-in-law, and Kaushalya looks on him as a son. Kambar explains his sociological concept very clearly when he makes Kumbhakarna tell Rama at the time of his death about his brother Vibhishana :

> "My brother does not heed to the petty concepts of caste based on birth and recognises only the eternal laws of righteousness."[79]

78. Kamba Ramayanam (6-4-146).

79. *Ibid.*, (6-15-357).

The sociological concept of Tulasidas stands totally on a different footing. Ramchandra Shukla states that 'the ideal of Goswami's (Tulasidas's) society is the same as expounded in Veda, Purana, Smriti etc. i. e., full adherence to Varanashrama, that is, castes and stages of life.'[80] Tulasidas has given expression to his sociological concepts based on caste in more than fifty places of his Ram-Charit-Manas wherein he has in very clear words glorified brahmins and denounced the shudras. A few instances are cited hereunder:

(*a*) Tulasidas holds that strict adherence to caste system is essential for society, and describes his ideal regime in 'Rama Rajya'—

> "Every one devoted himself to his duty in accordance with his caste and stage of life, and ever found happiness in treading the Vedic path."[81]

(*b*) Tulasidas exalted brahmins as Gods on earth' (Bhoosura) His summit reaches when he says through Rama to Kabandha:

> "Hearken, Gandharva, I declare to you that I am not pleased with those who injure brahmans. He who in thought and word and deed does sincere service to those gods on earth may command myself and Brahma and Shiva and all the other deities. A brahman is to be reverenced even though he curse and beat you and use harsh words—so say the saints. A brahman must be revered though he be devoid of goodness or virtue but a sudra never, however virtuous and learned."[82]

(*c*) The greatest sin according to Tulasilas is 'disrespect to a brahman'. Tulasidas says (through the mouth of Shiva) in Uttar Kanda:

> "The only vow that pleases Hari is a vow to do service to brahmans. Never treat brahmans with direspect, but hold a saint to be equal to God himself. Even one who perishes not at the stroke of Indra's thunderbolt or my massive trident or fate's decree or Hari's awful discuss is burnt to ashes in the fire of a brahman's vengeance."[83]

80. 'Goswami Tulasidas'—Ramchandra Shukla, p. 44.
81. Ram Charit Manas (7-43).
82. *Ibid.*, (3-40-4 to 3-41-1).
83. *Ibid.*, (7-178-6, 7).

(d) Even Samudra is made to say to Rama by Tulasidas :

> "A drum, a village boor, a sudra, a beast and woman, all these are fit for beating."[84]

(e) While explaining about the method of devotion, Tulasidas makes Rama tell Lakshmana:

> "First, by exceeding devotion to the feet of brahmans, and by careful attention to one's own special duty, as scripture prescribes. Next, the fruit of this is indifference to material objects, and thence is born devotion to my cult."[85]

(f) The post makes Jambavan state the secret of the incarnation of Rama thus—

> "Of his own will has the Lord come down from heaven to save gods and earth and cows and brahmans."[86]

(g) Rama himself tells Vibhishana at his first meeting:

> "Those who worship the personal and devote themselves to the good of others, and preserve in the ways of virtue and religious duty, and love the feet of brahmans are dear to me as my own life."[87]

(h) Tulasidas's Rama specifically states to Parashurama that if at all they fear and bow their heads to anybody, it is only to brahmins.[88] So also, the greatest of alms is offered to none else but brahmins. After the marriage of all the four sons at Mithila, King Dasharatha tells his religious teacher Vashishtha—

> "Now, holy father, summon all the brahmans and give them cows decked with every adornment.[89] ... ... He

84. *Ibid.*, (5-62-3)
85. *Ibid.*, (3-19-3, 4).
86. *Ibid.*, (4-29).
87. *Ibid.*, (5-49).
88. *Ibid.*, (1-316).
89. *Ibid.*, (1-363-4).

(the king) sent for four hundred thousand cows of noble breed, all as gentle as the cow of plenty. All these the king decked with every kind of ornament and gladly presented to the gods of earth (brahmans); and very humbly the monarch avowed that on that day his life had found its truest fulfilment. The king received their blessings and was glad."[90]

(*i*) Rama and his brothers go to sleep at night daily after meditating on Shiva, Guru and the feet of brahmins,[91] and after getting up they first bow to brahmins, gods, teacher, father and mother and get their blessings.[92]

(j) So also, as soon as Kaushalya hears of the coronation of Rama, she first offers in joy charities of various types to brahmins herself sending for them.[93]

(k) Lakshmana also, according to Tulasidas, is of the opinion that 'for the sake of his votaries and earth and brahmans and cows and gods, the gracious Lord in human form does such deeds that when one hears of them the snares of the world are burst asunder.'[94] So says Lakshmana to Guha when Rama and Sita are sleeping at Sringaverpur on their way to forest.

(l) Again, Rama tells Valmiki himself on their way to Chitrkoota :

"The happiness of brahmans is the root of all good and sacred. Brahman's anger will burn crores of families."[95]

Valmiki also tells Rama :

"Reside in the hearts of those who suffer for brahmans and cows"[96]

90. *Ibid.*, (1-364-1, 2).
91. *Ibid.*, (1-391).
92. *Ibid.*, (1-391-4).
93. *Ibid.*, (2-9-2).
94. *Ibid.*, (2-94).
95. *Ibid.*, (2-127-2).
96. *Ibid.*, (2-132-1).

and adds—

> "He who abandons caste and brotherhood, wealth, duty and position, dear kingsfolk and happy home, and treasures in his soul yourself alone — in his heart, Raghurai, make your stay."[97]

meaning thereby that case is as important as wealth, duty, position, dear kingsfolk, happy home etc.

(m) Bharata also feels the same way in Tulasi Ramayan. Pleading his innocence he says to Kaushalya—

> "O God, may I be held guilty of all the crimes that those commit who slay their parents or their sons, who burn the stalls of cows or cities where brahmans dwell, who murder wife or chidren or poison friend or king and transgressions, great or small, of thought or word or deed, of which the poets tell, if mother, I consented to this plot."[98]

(n) Vashishtha while advising Bharata not to grieve for the happenings, tells him—

> "Bethink you, my son, king Dasharatha should not be mourned. Grieve rather for that brahman who knows not the Veda, but abandons religious duty and devotes himself to things of sense. Grieve for that king (Kshatriya) who understands not state-craft and loves not his people as he loves his life. Grieve for that Vaishya who is rich but niggardly, unpractised in hospitality or devotion to Shiva. Grieve for that Shudra who dishonours brahmans, garrulous, ambitious and wise in his own conceits."[99]

97. *Ibid.*, (2-132-3).
98. *Ibid.*, (2-168-3, 4).
99. *Ibid.*, (2-173-1, 2, 3).

(o) Tulasidas describes the embrace of Bharata and Guha as follows:

> "Him whom the world and the Veda declare to be altogether mean, him the contact with whose shadow involves a ceremonial cleansing, Rama's younger brother is taking to his heart and embracing with a thrill of rapturous emotion."[100]

(p) Tulasidas has adopted his sociological concept of caste even while offering similies to describe nature. Describing the winter season the poet says:

> "Gnats and mosquitoes perish for fear of the winter frost, as a family perishes if it do injury to brahmans."[101]

(q) Tulasidas states the purpose of the incarnation of Rama immediately after his brith, as follows:

> "For the sake of brahmans, and cows and gods and saints he came down to earth as a man in a body formed of his own will, he who transcends illusion, the elements of nature and the senses."[102]

(r) While Rama-Rajya is in observance, one day Rama calls for the Guru, brahmins and all the citizens of Ayodhya and addresses them about various topics in which the following is an important one—

> "There is one deed of merit in the world, no other in thought and word and deed, to worship the feet of brahmans; he who with unfeigned devotion serves the feet of brahmans finds favour with gods and sages."[103]

Thus, according to K. B. Jindal, in the Ramayana of Tulasi—

> "The supremacy of the brahmans is emphasised with wearisome itineration."[104]

100. *Ibid.*, (2-195-2).
101. *Ibid.*, (4-20-4).
102. *Ibid.*, (1-224).
103. *Ibid.*, (7-68-4).
104. 'A History of Hindi Literature'—K. B. Jindal, p. 84.

So also Mishra Bandhu feels that such an exposition on the part of the poet is a little too improper.[105] But, the Russian scholar Barrannikov feels that very many of the above statements are later interpolation and have been introduced for self-glorification and popularity by certain other persons.[106]

IV—WOMANHOOD

Kambar and Tulasidas have expressed the same view so far as the ideal of womanhood is concerned. In describing the ideal state of Ayodhya, Kambar says that woman were well educated and rich.[107] So also, in the ideal state of Rama-Rajya, Tulasidas says:

> "All men and women were guileless, pious and upright, clever and accomplished; all recognized the virtues of others. All were wise and learned; all were grateful, none versed in deceit."[108]

Though the ideal of womanhood is expressed on the same lines by both the poets, they widely differ in their general reading of the normal nature of woman and their place in society. Kambar has stated not a single word denouncing woman-hood in the whole of his epic, but Tulasidas, perhaps due to certain personal bitter experiences in life, has in many places brought down the social status of woman and also attacked womanhood in general as being, by nature, full of unrighteous combinations. Regarding the treatment accorded to women by Tulasi in Ram Charit Manas, K. B. Jindal says:

> "Scathing criticism is made of woman-nature. Throughout his life the Gosain (Tulasidas) could not forget the rebuff he had received at the hands of his wife in the first flush of youth. A personal family quarrel[109] has stained the high moral tone of the Manas."[110]

105. 'Hindi Nava Ratna'—Mishra Bandhu, p. 156.
106. 'Manas Ki Roosi Bhoomika'—Trn. by Dr. Kesari Narayan Shukla, p. 133. (Writer of the original work—" Introducation to the Russia Translation of Ram Charit Manas'—Late A. P. Barrannikov).
107. Kamba Ramayanam (1-2-36).
108. Ram Charit Manas (7-44-4).
109. See 'Life of Tulasidas' in Chapter III.
110. 'A History of Hindi Literature'—K. B. Jindal, p. 84.

No such lowering of the moral tone of womanhood is anywhere reflceted in the Kamba Ramàyanam. Neither the poet Kambar nor any of his characters speaks of womanhood in a scathing manner, though Manthara and Kaikeyi have acted in the most unrighteous way due to their extraordinary attachment to Bharata. Though in Sita a perfect pattern of womanhood has been depicted by Tulasidàs, he has made drastic statements about woman in general in several places in the epic. W.D.P. Hill feels:

> "Tulasidas seems to relegate woman to a very low place in the order of creation and to consider them innately sensual born to tempt the male."[111]

There are about twenty-five places where Tulasidas has given expression to the general nature of woman either directly or through some character. A few of them are given hereunder:

(a) When Shiva relates to Sati (Bhavani) as to how Rama, searched for Sita in the forest, she begins to doubt the acts of Rama, but does not open her mind. Shiva understands the same and says:

> "The very nature of womanhood is to doubt. Never allow it to creep into your heart."[112]

(b) Sati appears before Rama in the guise of Sita. Rama recognises her. Now the poet Tulasi says:

> 'Even there Sati wants to conceal facts. Look at the nature of womanhood!'[113]

(c) When Manthara approaches Kaikeyi with tearful eyes, Tulasidas states:

> 'The womanly nature brings tears in her eyes.'[114]

suggesting that, by nature, women are prone to shed tears for any matter reasonable or otherwise.

111. Introduction to 'The Holy Lake of the Acts of Rama' (A translation of Tulasi Ramayan in English)—W.D.P. Hill, p. XXXVII.
112. Ram Charit Manas (1-74-3).
113. *Ibid.*, (1-76-3).
114. *Ibid.*, (2-14-3).

(d) When Kaikeyi begins to be taken in by the words of Manthara, the poet Tulasi says:

'Wisdom of a woman rests in lips.'[115]

(e) When Kaikeyi is won-over by Manthara, the poet says:

"The hunch-backed began to spread the illusion of womanhood."[116]

(f) On hearing of the boons demanded by Kaikeyi, the people of Ayodhya say:

"Truly say the poets that a woman's nature is altogether incomprehensible, unfathomable and inscrutable. One may grasp one's own shadow, my friend, but the way of a woman passes understanding. What is there that fire cannot burn or ocean contain? What deed defies a weak woman's strength? What is there that death devours not?"[117]

(g) Commenting upon his mother's action Bharata says:

"Not even God can fathom the ways of a woman's heart, a very mine of fraud and vice and worthlessness. The king was simple-minded and kindly, devoted to duty. How should he understand the nature of a woman?"[118]

(h) Ansuya, while advising Sita as to how she should behave, incidentally comments upon womanhood too. She says at first regarding the position of a good woman in the family set up:

"Though a husband be old, diseased, stupid or poor, blind, deaf, bad-tempered or in great distress, yet if his wife treats him with disrespect, she will suffer all the tortures of hell." [119]

115. *Ibid.*, (2-17).
116. *Ibid*, (2-22-2).
117. *Ibid.*, (2-48-4 and Doha 48).
118. *Ibid.*, (2-163-2, 3).
119. *Ibid.*, (3-6-4, 5).

Then she comments on womanhood and states—

"Woman is inherently impure."[120]

(i) Describing Shoorpanakha's love for Rama, Kakabhushundi tells Garuda:

"When a woman sees a comely man, be he brother, father or son, she is excited nor can she check her passion, as a sunstone melts at the sight of the sun."[121]

(j) Sabari while introducing herself to Rama with all humility, utters a statement about womanhood also in general. She states—

"The lowest of the low and—lower still is a woman."[122]

(k) Rama tells Lakshmana before meeting Hanuman or even Narada, in the Aranyakanda—

"However carefully the scriptures are studied, they must be read over again and again; however well a king may be served, one can never regard him as subject to one's influence; and though one keep a wife next one's heart, if she be young, she is no more mastered than the scriptures or a king."[123]

He further states—

"O Lakshmana, those who can stand their ground when they look on Kamadeva's (Cupid's) troops, are valiant indeed! His one supreme reliance is on woman, and he who can escape her toils is indeed a mighty warrior!"[124]

(l) Before Rama reaches the Rishyamooka mountain in search of Sita, Narada meets him and asks why he did not allow him to marry Vishvamohini, the daughter of king Sheela Nidhi. Rama replies expounding the nature of woman-hood as follows:

"Lust, wrath, greed, pride and all the other passions form the strong army of infatuation; but amongst them all the

120. *Ibid.*, (3-6).
121. *Ibid.*, (3-20-3).
122. *Ibid.*, (3-42-2).
123. *Ibid.*, (3-44-4, 5).
124. *Ibid.*, (3-46-6).

most dangerous and tormenting foe is woman, illusion incarnate. Hearken, sage, the Puranas and the Vedas and the Saints declare that woman is the season of spring to the forest of delusion; and every woman, like the summer-heat, dries up all the pools of prayer and penance and religious observance. Lust and wrath and pride and jealousy are frogs and she alone the rains to gladden them. Evil inclinations are a bed of lilies and she the autumn ever to cherish them. All forms of religion are like lotuses withered by 'her sensuality' as by the frost of winter. Woman, again, is the cool season fostered by which the javase grove (which grows green only in hot summer) of selfishness flourishes. Woman is a night, impenetrably dark, to bring delight to all the owls of sin; a hook to catch all the fish of sense, and strength and goodness and truth; so say the wise. A young woman is the root of all evil, a torment and the source of every woe. That was what I had in mind, O Sage, when I stood in your way."[125]

(m) At the end of Aranya kanda, Tulasidas says to his own mind—

"A young woman is like the flame of a lamp. Be not as the moth."[126]

(n) Describing the Rainy season, Tulasidas through Rama himself states to Lakshmana—

"The borders of the fields are broken down by the pelting rain, like woman spoilt by independence."[127]

(o) Samudra, the Ocean God, according to Tulasi manifests himself to Rama before the bridging, and in the course of his submissions tells Rama—

"A drum, a village boor, a sudra, a beast and a woman all these are fit for beating."[128]

125. *Ibid.*, (3-54 to 55).
126. *Ibid.*, (3-58).
127. *Ibid.*, (4-17-4).
128. *Ibid.*, (5-62-3).

(p) Tulasi's Ravana tells Mandodari after listening to her advices—

> "Oh, mighty, indeed is the power of ignorance! Truly do all say of a woman's nature that there are eight defects ever present in her heart—foolhardiness, falsity, fickleness, deceit, timidity, folly, impurity and cruelty."[129]

(q) Lamenting over Lakshmana who is lying unconscious due to the hit of 'Veera-ghatini' weapon sent by Indrajit, Rama says—

> "How can I face return to Ayodh, having lost a dear brother for a woman's sake?—The shame of her loss before the world I might have borne; to lose a wife is no great loss."[130]

(r) Sage Kakabhushundi tells Garuda in the Uttara Kanda of Tulasi Ramayan about the comparative merits and demerits of man and woman as follows—

> "Hearken, Garur; wisdom, detachment, austerity, scientific knowledge—these are all masculine nouns and the masculine (man) is altogether superior in strength. while feminine (woman) is weak and naturally inferior. Men who are self-controlled and resolute can forswear women, but not those who are lustful and slaves to the flesh and love not the feet of Raghubir; and even a very learned sage may fall a victim to the moon-bright face of a fawn-eyed damsel when he sees her. Now Vishnu's illusion is reveaeld as a woman. Here I am upholding no private judgement of my own, but I am declaring the doctrine of the Vedas, the Puranas and the Saints."[131]

Thus Tulasidas has denounced womanhood outright. Mishra Bandhu feel that 'such a Mahatma and Mahakavi ought not to have denounced womanhood to such an extent without deep thinking,[132] and Dr. Rajpati Deekshit supports it.[133] So also, Ramachandra

129. *Ibid.*, (6-23-1. 2).
130. *Ibid*, (6-83-6).
131. *Ibid.*, (7-194-8 to 7-196-1)
132. 'Hindi Nava Ratna'—Mishrabandhu, p. 171.
133. 'Tulasidas aur Unka yuga', Ram Naresh Tripathi, pp. 74, 75.

Shukla states that the treatment offered by Tulasidas to womanhood is 'against good taste'[134] Dr. Mata Prasad Gupta goes to the extent of saying that in depicting womanhood, Tulasidas is extremely unsympathetic, and none can deny that though some try to whitewash the same. His views on womanhood are highly improper and contemptible. He has surpassed all the other poets and even saints in denouncing womanhood.[135]

It may, however, be stated that wherever Tulasidas has denounced womanhood, it was only the outbursts of his lower mind which was once hurt by a woman, and not his higher mind which looks at all animates and inanimates of the world as latent in Sita and Rama, and bows with folded hands.[136]

V—FATE

Fate as an inevitable result of one's actions in earlier and present births, based on the theory of rebirth, is one of the most fundamental concepts of Hindu Theology. In the Tamil classics like Tirukkural, Silappadiharam, etc., and in Sanskrit writings great emphasis has been laid on the doctrine of fate. Speaking on fate, the 'Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics' states:

> "Success in every enterprise depends on Destiny and human acts; the acts of Destiny are out of man's control. Think not on Destiny, but act thyself.' (Manusmriti, VII. 205, Tr. M. Williams). 'Fate I consider paramount, human effort is futile. Everything is governed by Fate; Fate is the final resort' (Ramayana I. viii. 22). 'Fate binds a man with adamantine cords, and drags him upwards to the highest rank, or downward to the depths of misery' (ib. vii, xxxvii. 3: Tr. M. Williams.)"[137]

Kambar and Tulasidas also have accepted the theory of fate throughout their epics. In Kamba Ramayanam and Tulasi Ramayan, fate appears to be the guiding factor at each and every stage. All situations are based upon fate, and the 'why' of the same is explained by the characters or the poet finally through Fate alone.

134. 'Goswami Tulasidas' —Ram Chandra Shukla, p. 58.
135. 'Tulasidas' —Dr. Mata Prasad Gupta, pp. 299, 301, 302.
136. 'Kambar aur Tulasi'—S. Shankar Raju Naidu, p. 8.
137. 'Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics'—Vol. V, p. 791.

Strength or effort never succeeds over fate; and if success is achieved in any action by strength or effort, that strength or effort comes forth only due to fate yielding success at the end. Thus fate appears to be all in all in both the epics. A few examples are cited hereunder—

(i) **KAMBAR:**

(a) The very birth of Rama is described as due to the fate based on sins (committed by Ravana and other demons) on one side, and virtues (of sages and rishis) on the other.[138]

(b) The originator of the tragic events is Manthara who is goaded by severe fate. She is said to have been impelled by her sins, and was merely an instrument in the hands of fate.[139]

(c) Kaikeyi herself accuses Manthara and says that it is only due to fate that she is uttering statements which are neither righteous nor beneficial to herself or Bharata.[140]

(d) The poet Kambar states that after hearing of the boons offered to Kaikeyi, Rama goes to Kaushalya with fate ahead of him and the sobbing righteousness at the rear.[141]

(e) When Lakshmana gets furious hearing of the boons, Rama explains to him—

> "They blame not streams if water sometimes fails; blame thou not then our king, nor her our mother: 'Tis fate that drives us on, my brother! Why then this rage?"[142]

Lakshmana angered at Rama's exile does not get satisfied with the philosophy of fate and asks Rama 'to see the work of his bow as fate to fate itself.'[143] But when forced by Sita to go for Rama's

138. 'Kamba Ramayanam' (1-11-20).
139. *Ibid.*, (2-2-44, 48).
140. *Ibid.*, (2-2-65).
141. *Ibid.*, (2-4-2).
142. *Ibid.*, (2-4-134).
143. *Ibid.*, (2-4-135).

assistance after the deer Mareechra was shot, he accepts the theory of fate, and observes:

> "Who can succeed over the decrees of unfailing fate?"[144]

(f) Vashishtha sees Rama and Lakshmana ready in weeds to start for the forest. He inwardly pines and says:

> "Even if the Supreme Creator Brahma, the four-headed himself would be surrounded by fate, he cannot overcome it."[145]

(g) Describing the moon-rise when Sumantra the charioteer returns, and Rama with Sita and Lakshmana enters the forest, the poet Kambar says—

> "The fair silvery moon lovely appeared happily like the face of righteousness to see the outcome of fate."[146]

(h) After the death of Khara and others, Shoorpanakha goes to Ravana and says:

> "Though great the merit earned by austerities,
> As destiny doth rule us all, no good
> Can come to us except in its own time:
> For, Sire, 'tis only now that thou art given
> T' enjoy th' advantage of thy twenty eyes and arms."[147]

(i) Describing the seeding of passion in the heart of Ravana, the poet says—

> "Because his own destiny egged him on from behind, and because his actions and thoughts of the past were maturing in order to bear their appropriate fruit, and also because the days of his prosperity were fast approaching their appointed end, the pangs of his passion grew more and more intense even as the seed of evil secretly sown by an ignorant fool."[148]

144. *Ibid.*, (3-8-15).
145. Kamba Ramayanam (2-4-164).
146. *Ibid.*, (2-5-50).
147. *Ibid.*, (3-7-80).
148. *Ibid.*, (3-7-86).

(j) Hearing of the bad intention of Ravana, Mareecha tells him at his very face—

> "O king, you have ended your life, lost your wisdom, It is not so by your effort. I understand that it is only due to your fate."[149]

Again finding Ravana adamant in his decision, Mareecha thinks—

> "There is no way of escape. Who can understand the decrees of fate? The orders have but to be obeyed."[150]

(k) The poet says that the golden deer comes and stands before Rama, Sita and Lakshmana like—

> 'the insurmountable fate.'[151]

(l) Seeing the state of Jatayu after Ravana cutting off its wing, Sita cries—

> 'Having lost all wisdom, I frowned on Lakshmana and forced him to leave the cottage for the assistance of my Lord. Now the king of vultures is also laid down with its wing cut, and I get fainted. What all miseries are yet to be brought by fate?'[152]

(m) When Ravana escapes to Lanka with Sita, Jatayu laments—

> 'The fate has broken the fences of righteousness.'[153]

(n) After shooting at the deer Mareecha, Rama returns with a doubtful mind and sees Lakshmana on the way. He thinks now ... ...

> 'Where will the fate lead to?'[154]

149. *Ibid.* (3-7-177).
150. *Ibid.*, (3-7-208).
151. *Ibid.*, (3-7-226).
152. *Ibid.*. (3-8-132).
153. *Ibid*, (3-8-140).
154. *Ibid.*, (3-8-152).

(o) Not finding Sita and the cottage too, Rama and Lakshmana come along the track of the chariot of Ravana, and meet Jatayu who consoles them by saying—

> "Who can achieve anything extraordinary? The pleasures and pains in this mortal life are all based on fate. Should it not be accepted, can ever wisdom and effort succeed over fate?"[155]

Jatayu cites examples in proof of the doctrine of fate. Even Brahma, the creator could not escape fate, and had one of his heads severed by Shiva himself, thus bringing the heads to four.[156]

(p) Vali's last request to Rama is—

> "* * * And see
> That thy own brothers point not the fingers of scorn
> Against Sugriv for having brought about
> My death: for thou hadst thyself sworn to right
> His wrongs; and how could he be charged for deeds
> That flow therefrom as effects from their cause?"[157]

Vali means the unavoidable fate when he says—

> "That flow therefrom as effects from their cause."

(q) The last advice of Vali to Sugriva is —

> "Fate alone is the final support. Nothing can be achieved without fate."[158]

(r) Hanuman while describing to Sita at the Ashoka garden as to what happened when the false golden deer, Mareecha, had appeared, says—

> "When the false deer shouted, the lord gave twangs of his bow to put down the sound of the cries, but still the power of fate did have its forces executed."[159]

155. *Ibid.*, (3-8-193).
156. *Ibid.*, (3-8-194).
157. *Ibid.*, (4-7-128).
158. *Ibid.*, (4-7-135).
159. *Ibid.*, (5-5-75).

(s) Describing the pitiable state of Rama, the poet states in Sundara Kanda—

'Who on earth can cross the boundry of fate?'[160]

(t) Kumbhakarna advises Ravana, but seeing him adamant in his stand, he concludes—

"Is the war approaching? Is it waged for the invaluable gold-like Sita? She, the embodiment of chastity and like the serpent with poison in eyes, is not left of thinking on all the earlier words of advice I uttered? Your adamant behaviour is only due to the decrees of severe fate."[161]

He further tells Ravana while starting for war with his mighty trident in hand:

"Forgive me, my brother, I go: but I hope not
For victory against the Men. 'Tis fate
That drives me on. This day will be my last
Upon the earth. But brother, at least when I'm
No more, release the human damsel fair.
I see no other way."[162]

(u) Sita, lamenting on seeing Lakshmana also lying on the ground as dead with Rama, says—

"Our exile to the dreadful forest was only due to fate."[163]

(v) After the destruction of the Nikumbhila sacrifice, Indrajit comes to fight with Lakshmana. Now the terror-striken gods feel happy and exclaim—

"It is only fate that has dragged him to war, and is sure to die by the shafts of Lakshmana."[164]

160. *Ibid.*, (5-5-84).
161. *Ibid.*, (6-15-80).
162. *Ibid.*, (6-15-95).
163. *Ibid.*, (6-22-18).
164. *Ibid.*, (6-26-88).

(w) Even Kaushalya, while appealing to Bharata not to end his life by falling into the fire due to the delay in the return of Rama, tells him—

> " 'Tis destiny, my son, that drove thy brother
> And father to their several fates; but what
> Is it that thou'rt about, O Child? It is
> A thoughtless deed."[165]

(ii) *Tulasidas* :

(a) Shiva tells within himself seeing Sati not understanding him, when he said of the lamentations of Rama for the lost Sita—

> "Daksha's daughter will come to no good. If her doubt is not dispelled by all that, I could say, then fate is adverse and ill will come of it. As Rama has decreed, so shall it be; then why make a long argument about it?"[166]

Here when the poet says 'As Rama has decreed', he means 'the fate.'

(b) After relating the story of Pratapa Bhanu, the poet makes a categorical statement as follows:

> "As destiny decrees, so help appears; either it comes to a man itself or leads him away to safety."[167]

(c) Seeing the sad lot of king Pratapa Bhanu, the brahmins who had come for the feast tell him—

> "O King, what will be will be, even though the fault be not yours."[168]

165. *Ibid.*, (6-37-229).
166. Ram Charit Manas (1-75-3, 4).
167. *Ibid.*, (1-188).
168. *Ibid.*, (1-204).

(d) Gods go to Saraswati and request her to go to Ayodhya, when they say—

'All lives get pleasure and pains based upon their fate.'[169]

(e) When finally, Kaikeyi begins to believe the words of Manthara, the poet says—

"Under the influence of fate the queen at last became convinced and, blinding her by Oath, put further questions.'"[170]

(f) Describing the response of king Dasharatha to Kaikeyi, the poet says—

"The king, victim of fate, looked on it all as the playfulness of love."[171]

(g) When the people of Ayodhya come to know of the mishap against the coronation of Rama, they say—

'It is only the fate which has spoiled the whole matter.'[172]

(h) While leaving for the forest with Rama, Sita tells Kaushalya—

"Hear me, mother! I am most hapless. Just when I should be serving you, fate has sent me to the forest, nor has granted my desire its fulfilment. But have done with melancholy and cease not to love me; fate is relentless and I am not to blame.[173]

(i) Just before leaving for the forest, Rama goes to his father for blessings. The king takes him in his arms and tells him—

"God apportions fruit in exact accordance with actions, good and bad; as a man acts, so is he rewarded. That

169. *Ibid.*, (2-13-2).
170. *Ibid.*, (2-20-1).
171 *Ibid.*, (2-26-Chand).
172. *Ibid.* (2-48-1).
173 *Ibid.*, (2-70-2, 3).

is the Vedic principle and all declare it. But now one commits the crime and another suffers the penalty; very mysterious are the ways of the Blessed Lord. Who in the world can fathom them?"[174]

(j) Seeing Rama and Sita lying on the floor at night, Nishada (Guha) tells Lakshmana—

"Is there any from whom God has not turned away his face? Should Sita and Raghubir have been exiled to the forest? True is the saying that fate is paramount!"[175]

(k) Lakshmana tells Nishada consoling him—

"There is none who can bring joy or sorrow to another; For all reap the reward, brother, for the deeds that they themselves have done."[176]

(l) Before the return of Sumantra, the poet says—

"The will of Rama cannot be gainsaid; the ways of fate are hard and no power can annul them.'[177]

(m) When Lakshmana asks the village folk about the way to the forest, the poet says—

"The men and women were grieved to hear him ask it; they trembled with emotion and their eyes filled with tears. Then, pondering the ways of fate, they composed themselves and deciding on the easiest road, pointed it out to them."[178]

Now Rama with Lakshmana and Sita goes along the way and the village men and women "loudly lament, inwardly blaming fate.'"[179]

174. *Ibid.*, (2-78-4 and Doha 78).
175. *Ibid.*, (2-92-4).
176. *Ibid.*, (2-93-2).
177. *Ibid.*, (2-100-4).
178. *Ibid.*, (2-119-4).
179. *Ibid.*, (2-120-1).

(n) After telling about the departure of Rama, Sita and Lakshmana into the forest, Sumantra tries to console the pining king Dasharatha in these words—

"Birth and death, the suffering of pain and the enjoyment of pleasure, loss and gain, union with those we love and separation from them—all these are ruled by fate and destiny, sire, and are as certain in their sequence as night and day. Fools take delight in pleasure and cry out at pain, but men of courage regard both as one. Be of good cheer, then, with wise determination O guardian of your people, and grieve no more."[180]

(o) Consoling Bharata, Kaushalya tells him—

"Dear child, take courage now, I adjure you; sorrow no more, remembering that the times are out of joint. You know the ways of destiny and fate to be immutable; away then with melancholy and despair! Blame no one, my son; for it is the Creator who has set his face against me; in the midst of so much sorrow he will not let me die, and who knows what may be his pleasure now?"[181]

(p) Vashishtha, the Lord of sages, consoles Bharata thus—

"Hearken Bharat, fate is all powerful; loss and gain, life and death, fame and infame are in the hand of God. This being so who can be blamed or who the object of a fruitless indignation? Bethink you my son, king Dasharatha should not be mourned."[182]

(q) Bharata tells Nishada—

"If Rama also should sleep on the ground over the kusha grass, see how great is the power of fate."[183]

180. *Ibid.*, (2-151-3, 4).
181. *Ibid.*, (2-166-3, 4).
182. *Ibid.*, (2-172 and 2-173-1) .
183. *Ibid.*, (2-201).

Nishada also sympthetically responds to him and says, "Certain is that blame rests with an adverse fate. Cruel is the work of an adverse fate that drove you mad."[184]

(r) Sage Bharadwaja also consoles Bharata explaining to him the decrees of fate. He says—

> 'None can escape the purpose of fate.'[185]

Then later the sage says—

> "Rama's banishment for the forest was the root of all the mischief, and all the world was pained to hear of it. That was fate's decree, and the queen, having worked this ill in her senseless folly, has at the last repented. If any say that herein you are in the least to blame, he is a base creature, senseless and evil."[186]

(s) Brihaspati, the teacher of the gods, tells Indra about the invincibility of fate, when he requests him to stop the meeting of Bharata and Rama by some foul play. Brihaspati says—

> "Though he (Rama) impartial, feeling neither desire nor anger regarding not merit or demerit, virtue or defect, and has appointed fate the soverign of the Universe, so that as a man sows he reaps, yet does he play at partiality according as hearts are faithful or unfaithful."[187]

Here Tulasidas while stressing on the decrees of fate, tells of the efficacy of devotion also to him.

(t) Sita and the queens also finally take shelter under fate. The poet says—

> "When Sita beheld all the queens (at Chitrakoota), she closed her eyes and delicately shuddered, for they seemed to her like swans fallen into the fowler's power; what

184. *Ibid.*, (2-202-4 and Chand).
185. *Ibid.*, (2-207-4).
186. *Ibid.*, (2-208-3, 4).
187. *Ibid.*, (2-220-2, 3).

is this, she thought, that a cruel Creator (fate) has done? And as they looked at Sita, they were deeply grieved; all must be endured, they thought, that fate imposes.'"[188]

(u) Seeing Rama, Sita and Lakshmana in exile, king Janaka and all others who had assembled at Chitrakoota, blamed only fate. The poet says—

"Plunged into a sea of sadness, men and women mourned in deep distress, all crying with indignant reproaches, what is this that adverse fate has done?"[189]

(v) Sunayana (mother of Sita), Sumitra and Kaushalya also take shelter under the same fate. At Chitrakoota, when the mother of Sita says that 'The decisions of Fate are unjust'[190], Queen Sumitra sorrowfully answers—

"The ways of god (fate) are very contrary and hard to understand; he preserves his creation and then destroys it. His purposes are as meaningless as a game played by a child.'"[191]

Now Kaushalya says—

"No one is to blame. Pain, pleasure, loss and gain, are controlled by fate; inscrutable are the ways of destiny, known only to the creator, who apportions all rewards both good and ill. All are subject to the will of God. Creation, preservation and dissolution, poison and ambrosia are ordered by his decree; vain is it O Queen, to sorrow in the toils of delusion, so immutable and from everlasting are God's designs. If we regard the king's life or death and mourn for him, sister, it is because we are thinking of our own loss."[192]

188. *Ibid.*, (2-247-2, 3).
189. *Ibid.*, (2-277-Chand).
190. *Ibid.*, (2-282-4).
191. *Ibid.*, (2-283-1).
192. *Ibid.*, (2-283-2, 3, 4).

Thus there are very many references throughout the epic on the decrees of fate.

However, one specific aspect of both the poets deserves special emphasis here. Both the poets agree that, the grace of Rama can win over the pre-ordained fate also.

Kambar states while describing the great efficacy of the two letters of the name 'Rama'—

> "The two letters of the name 'Rama' ('Ra' and 'Ma') if uttered will get all the good things and wealth and the bad effects and evil fate will be destroyed, and also will save us from birth and death."[193]

So also, Tulasidas states—

> "The acts of Rama are a beauteous talisman and adorn the wisdom of the saints as charming ornaments a woman.[194] * * * A very precious spell are they to counter the snake of sensual desire; potent to delete the lines of evil destiny graven on the forehead, hard to efface."[195]

Again, Tulasidas says of the same effect by the worship of Shiva as well. Narada advises the father of the virgin Uma—

> "Hearken, O Himavan! what fate has written on the forehead, no god or demon, man, serpent or sage is able to delete. Yet I declare one means of avoidance which, if heaven help, may avail.[196] * * * If your daughter practise penance, Tripurari (Shiva) is able to annul her destiny."[197]

Thus we see that both the master-poets, Kambar and Tulasidas, have followed the philosophy of fate on the same lines in their respective epics.

193. Kamba Ramayanam ('Kappu'—Stanza No. 13).
194. Ram Charit Manas (1-52-1).
195. *Ibid.*, (1-52-5). See also (1-94-3).
196. *Ibid.*, (1-92; 1-93-1).
197. *Ibid.*, (1-94-3).

Summary:

The summit of literary excellence reached in Kamba Ramayanam and Tulasi Ramayan is of a very great height though Kambar takes it as the end and Tulasi as the means. Both have ably depicted all the sentiments so as to create the respective aesthetic pleasures (Rasa) in the hearts of the sympathetic readers. Kambar's language has reached greater heights than were already found in the then highly-evolved Tamil, whereas Tulasidas has created a refined style for himself in the Avadhi language of the Avadh soil. The metrical compositions of both are onomatopoetically superb, i.e., in sound echoing the sense, and the flow of their respective literary streams is in accordance with the ideas conveyed therein. So also figures of speech like simile and metaphor of both the master-artists are true, illuminating and exemplary.

In their sociological concepts, they differ greatly. Kambar has a cosmopolitan out-look and a high sense of brother-hood. Tulasidas, according to his own conception, follows implicitly the Hindu concept of caste, elevating the place of brahmins as the highest and shudras as the lowest in society. About womanhood, Kambar has not stated anything derogatory or demeaning, whereas Tulasidas has, in several places, expressed a frank opinion that the woman is a repository of bad qualities. He has relegated her to an inferior status in society.

The social philosophy of both the poets rests greatly on the inevitability of fate. However, both agree that prayer can overcome its immutability.

CHAPTER VII

CONCLUSION

(i) *Kamba Ramayanam* :

Kambar, 'The poet of poets', is undoubtedly 'the greatest of Tamil Poets'. M. S. Poornalingam Pillai states in his 'Tamil Literature', "His Ramayanam takes a rank in Tamil Literature equal to that of the Iliad of Homer in the Literature of Greece."[1] The Tamil people have conferred on him the title of Kavichakravarti, i.e., 'King of Poesy'. Though the same title was awarded to two other poets—Jayamkondan, the author of the celebrated work 'Kalingattup Parani' and Ottakkoottar, the author of 'Uttara Kandam'—their titles have gone into disuse. These two poets were honoured with the title, not by the people but by kings under whom they were poet-laureates. The title now denotes Kambar only. Professor Vaiyapuri Pillai states in his essay on 'Kamban' :

> "Kamban is, for and above the greatest of the Tamil Poets. Judged by any standard, he is assuredly one of the world poets; and his Ramayanam remains a monumental wonder for all ages."[2]

1. 'Tamil Literature'—M. S. Poornalingam Pillai, p. 215.
2. 'Kamban Kaviyam'—Prof. S. Vaiyapuri Pillai, pp. 151, 156.

Mahakavi Subramania Bharati, the modern national poet of Tamil, states in one of his verses:

> "It is Truth and nothing but Truth. It is not for mere praise that I proclaim that among the poets I know of, none like Kambar, Valluvar and Ilango were ever born anywhere on this earth."[3]

Here again, the poet mentions the name of Kambar at first leading to the inference that Kambar is the greatest of the three poets.

While assigning the place of Kamba Ramayanam in the World Literature, V. V. S. Aiyar states categorically:

> "In the Ramayanam of Kamban, the world possesses an epic which can challange comparison not merely with the Iliad and the Aeneid, the Paradise Lost and the Mahabharata but with its original itself, namely, the Ramayana of Valmiki. This is not the language of mere patriotic enthusiasm. It is an opinion that has grown slowly with years and after deep and careful study.'[4]

Professor Chelvakesavaraya Mudaliar says that 'the prop (ka-ti) of Tamil are two, 'Ka' standing for Kambar and 'Ti' standing for Tiruvalluvar."[5] He obviously means that the greatest of Tamil works is Kamba Ramayanam.

(ii) *Tulasi Ramayan* :

Mr. K. B. Jindal concludes his comments on Tulasi Ramayan as 'A perfect example of a perfect book'.[6] and hopes that 'some day it will be accredited as belonging to the literature of the world.'[7]

3. 'Bharati Padalhal'—Published by Shakti Karyalayam, p. 36.
4. 'Kamba Ramayanam-A Study'—V. V. S. Aiyer, p. 1.
5. 'Tiruvallvuar'—T. Chelvakesavaraya Mudaliar, p. 7.
6. 'A History of Hindi Literature'—K. B. Jindal, p. 66.
7. *Ibid.*, Preface, p. viii.

The Hindi speaking population of North India look at Tulasi Ramayan as their Bible. Grierson has understood properly indeed the interest evinced by the people in Tulasi Ramayan, when he says, "Pandits may talk of the Vedas and of the Upanishads, and a few may even study them; others may say they pin their faith on the Puranas; but to the vast majority of the people of Hindustan, learned and unlearned alike, their sole norm of conduct is the so-called Tulsi-Krit Ramayan."[8]

F. E. Keay in his 'Hindi Literature' states that Tulasidas is decidedly the most respected name in the entire Hindi Literature, the fame of whose Ramayan has spread not only in India but throughout the World."[9]

Edwin Greaves goes still further and states in his book, 'A Sketch of Hindi Literature' that "no poet of England has reached the people of that country so much as has Tulasidas in his own country.'"[10] As has already been stated, V. S. Smith considers him to be "the greatest man of his age in India."[11]

A. P. Barrannikov, the Russian Translator of 'Tulasi Ramayan', considers Tulasidas on the merits of this work as 'The greatest Poet of Mediaeval India.''[12]

Describing how 'dear and sacred' is the name of Tulasidas to the vast multitudes of North India, Dr. Ram Awadh Dwivedi states:

> "It is often said that no decent English house-hold is without a copy of Shakespeare's works and the Bible. But Ram Charit Manas of Tulasidas, for the teeming millions of North India, takes the place of Bible and Shakespeare combined."[13]

8. 'The Modern Vernacular Literature of Hindustani'—Sir George A. Grierson, p. 43.
9. 'Hindi Literature'—F. E. Keay, p. 47.
10. 'Manas Ki Roosi Bhoomika'—Trn. Dr. Kesari Narain Shukla, p. 169.
11. 'Akbar, the Great Moghul'—V. A. Smith (2nd Edn.), p. 417.
12. 'Manas Ki Roosi Bhoomika'—Trn. Dr. Kesari Narayan Shukla, p. 16.
13. 'Hindi Literature'—Dr. Ram Awadh Dwivedi M.A., D.Litt., p. 49-50.

After a critical analysis of the nine great poets of Hindi, Mishra Bandhu express their categorical opinion, though with exaggeration, "We consider him to be the greatest among the Hindi poets. In short according to our limited vision, no poet greater than Tulasidas ever appeared in the whole world in any language."[14]

In the introduction to his commentary on 'Ram Charit Manas', Shyam Sundar Das states, 'From the point of literary merits there is no other classic in Hindi Literature which can stand equal to Ram Charit Manas.'[15]

Criticising the oft-repeated 'doha' which means that 'Surdas is the sun, Tulasi the moon and Keshava Das the stars of Hindi Literature', Ramchanadra Shukla states that this particular doha has been composed by some versifier just for the play of pun on 'Sur' which means both 'the blind poet Surdas' (known as the Milton of Hindi Literature) and also the 'sun', the root the word being 'Surya'. In his book 'Goswami Tulasidas', while writing on his place in Hindi Literature, Ramchandra Shukla concludes by stating, "If anybody would enquire about the greatest Hindi Poet who has the greatest of command over the hearts of the people, there can be only this proper reply that he is decidedly Bharat-Hridaya, Bharati-Kantha, Bhakta Choodamani Goswami Tulisidas.[16]

Thus we find that Kamba Ramayanam and Tulasi Ramayan are the culminations of the age old story of Ramayana which existed in some form or the other, much anterior to Valmiki. It seems probable that the first available form of the story of the Ramayana is the 'Dasharatha Jataka' found in the 'Jatakattha Vannana' where Rama and Sita are described as brother and sister, both born to Dasharatha and his first queen consort. This story seems to have evolved, with the change of time and society, into Sita being depicted as the daughter of Ravana, the king of Lanka in the far south, and Rama remaining the son of Dasharatha. Valmiki's version of the Ramayana seems to be a very successful evolution from the same plot with adequate changes right from the birth of Sita as the daughter of mother-earth

14. 'Hindi Nava Ratna'—Mishra Bandhu, p. 200.
15. 'Ram Charit Manas' (Introduction)—Shyam Sundar Das, p. 76.
16. 'Goswami Tulasidas' — Ramchandra Shukla, p. 191.

(Bhoomi-ja) to Janaka, and Rama as the eldest son of Dasharatha, born due to the effect of the Putrakameshthi Yagya, i.e., sacrifice for begetting a son, by the sage Rishyashringa. From the evolution of this final and complete form of Valmiki Ramayana, we have got the outstanding poetic form of Kamba Ramayanam in Tamil, saturated in its ancient cultural pattern, and the devotional Adhyatma Ramayana in Sanskrit whose author is still in the realm of mystery. Tulasi Ramayan in Avadhi is the outcome of all the above Ramayanas with an extraordinary fusion of devotion superseding the elements of even poesy.

This evolution of the epic has remarkably moulded not only the story but also the characterisation, social background, philosophy and the objectives contained therein. Its sublime dual culminations reach in the powerful expositions of Kavi-Bhakta Kambar and Bhakta-Kavi Tulasidas.

It can well be expressed that the Ramayana has immortalised both Kavichakravarti Kambar and Goswami Tulasidas entitling them with the greatest of places in their respective literary fields. It can well be stated that Kambar is the Tulasidas of the Tamil literature and Tulasidas is the Kambar of Hindi Literature.

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

Tamil

Ahananuru	
Araicchittohudi	.. M. Raghavaiengar
Chilappadiharam (Silappadiharam)	.. Ilango Adihal
Gangaikkarayil Kavirittamizh	.. A. M. Paramasivanandam
Golden Jubilee Number—1957	.. Manavar Mandram, Madras
Jeevahachintamani Chorpozhivu (Commemmoration volume)	.. M. V. Venu Gopala Pillai
Kalittohai	
Kamba Ramayanam	.. Shakti Publication, Madras
Kamba Ramayanam (with commentary)	.. V. M. Gopalakrishnamachariar
Kamban Kanda Tamizhaham	.. P. Jeevanandam
Kamban Kanda Tamizhaham	.. Sami Chidambaranar
Kamban Kavitai	.. Navayuga Prachuralayam, Madras.
Kamban Kaviyam	.. S. Vaiyapuri Pillai
Kamban Malar	.. Madras Kambar Kazhaham Publication, 1944
Kambar	.. T. Chengalvaraya Mudaliar
Kaviya Arangil	.. A. Srinivasa Raghavan
Kumara Gurupara Swamihal Prabandhangal	.. U. V. Swaminatha Iyer
Mahakavi Bharatiyar	.. Shakti Publication, Madras.
Manimehalai	.. Cheettalai Chattanar
Manthirai Choolchi	.. P. Tirukoodasundaram
Nalayirapprabandham	.. Twelve Alwars

Purananuru	
Ravana Darbar	.. G. Ethirajulu Naidu
Tamil Ilakkiya Varalaru	.. K. Subrahmania Pillai
Tevaram	.. Appar, Sambandhar & Sundarar
Tirukkural (with commentary)	.. Parimelazhahar
Tiruvalluvar	.. T. Chelvakesavaraya Mudaliar
Tiruvalluvar Nool Nayam	.. R. P. Sethu Pillai
Tolkappiyam (with commentary)	.. Nacchinarkkiniyar
Vazhi Vazhi Valluvar	.. R. P. Sethu Pillai
Velum Villum	.. R. P. Sethu Pillai

Hindi

Bhagwat Sampradaya	.. Baldeo Upadhyaya
Bharateeya Sahitya ki Sanskritic Rekhayen	.. Parashuram Chaturvedi
Bharateeya Sanskriti	.. Shiv Datta Gyani
Chintamani	.. Ramchandra Shukla
Drishtikon	.. Vinaya Mohan Sharma
Goswami Tulasidas	.. Ramchandra Shukla
Goswami Tulasidas	.. Shyam Sundar Das
Goswami Tulasidas	.. Sitaram Chaturvedi
Goswami Tulasidas aur Ram Katha	.. Satyadeo Chaturvedi
Goswami Tulasidas ki Samanvaya Sadhana	.. Biohar Rajendra Singh
Hindi Bhasha ka Itihas	.. Dhirendra Varma
Hindi Bhasha aur Sahitya	.. Shyam Sundar Das
Hindi Bhasha aur Sahitya ka Vikas.	.. Ayodhya Singh Upadhyaya 'Hariaudh'
Hindi Kavya aur Uska Saundarya	.. Om Prakash

Hindi Kavya Dhara	..	Rahul Sankrityayan
Hindi Mahakavya ka Swaroop Vikas	...	Shambunath Singh
Hindi Nav Ratna	..	Mishra Bandhu
Hindi Sahitya ka Alochanatmak Itihas	..	Ram Kumar Verma
Hindi Sahitya ka Itihas	..	Ramchandra Shukla
Hindutva	..	Ramdas Gaud
Jain Sahitya aur Itihas	..	Nathuram Premi
Kalidas aur Bhavabhuti	..	Babu Dvijendra Lal Roy (Tr.) Roop Narayan Pandae
Kambar aur Tulasi	..	S. Shankar Raju Naidu
'Manas' : Balakand ke Srot.	..	Shreesh Kumar
Manas Darshan	..	Srikrishna Lal
Manas ki Ram Katha	..	Parashuram Chaturvedi
Manas ki Roosi Bhoomika	..	A. P. Barrannikov (Trn. Kesarinarayan Shukla)
Manas Rashasya	..	Jairamdas 'Deen'
Manas me Ram Katha	..	Baldeo Prasad Mishra
Manas Shanka Samadhan	...	Hanuman Prasad Poddar
Nav Ras.	..	Gulab Rai
Ram Charit Manas	..	(Ed.) Rameshwar Bhatt
Ram Charit manas	..	(Ed.) Shyam Sundar Das
Ram Charit Manas	..	Srikant Sharan
Ram Katha	..	Kamil Bulkey, Rev. Fr.
Ram Rajya	..	Rambahadur Lamgoda
Ramcharitmanas me Lokvarta	..	Chandra Bhan
Sahitya ka Marm	..	Hazari Prasad Dwivedi
Sahityavalokan	..	Vinaya Mohan Sharma
Saket	..	Maithilisaran Gupta
Sanskrit Sahitya ka Itihas	..	Baldeo Upadhyaya

Sanskriti ke Char Adhyaya .. Ramdhari Singh 'Dinkar'

Srimad Valmiki Ramayan .. Gopal Sharma

Sur Sagar .. Nagri Pracharini Sabha Edition

Tulasi .. Ram Bahori Shukla

Tulasi Darshan .. Baldeo Prasad Mishra

Tulasi ka Gaveshnatmak Adhyayan .. Kumar

Tulasi ke Char Dal .. Satgur Sharan Avasthi

Tulasi Meemansa .. Kanhaiyalal Sharma

Tulasi Rachanavali ... Bajrang Bali

Tulasi Rasayan .. Bhagirath Mishra

Tulasi Sahitya aur Siddhanta .. Yagyadatta Sharma

Tulasi Sahitya ki Bhoomika .. Ram Ratan Bhatnagar

Tulasi Sahitya Ratnakar (Mahakavi Tulasidas) .. Ramchandra Dwivedi

Tulasi Shabda Sagar .. Bholanath Tiwari

Tulasidas .. Chandra Bali Pandae

Tulasidas .. Mataprasad Gupta

Tulasidas .. Ram Ratan Bhatnagar

Tulasidas aur Unka Granth .. Bhagirath Prasad Dikshit

Tulasidas aur Unka Kavya .. Ram Naresh Tripathi

Tulasidas aur Unka Yug .. Rajpati Dikshit

Uttari Bharat ki Sant Parampara .. Parashuram Chaturvedi

Vishwa Sahitya me Ram-Charit Manas .. Ram Bahadur Lamgoda

English

Akbar, the Great Moghul	.. V. A. Smith
Chambers Encyclopaedia Volume XI	
Dr. R. P. Sethu Pillai Silver Jubilee Commemoration Volume—1961	.. (Ed.) M. Rajamanikkam, University of Madras.
Encyclopaedia Americana Volume 23	
Encyclopaedia of Religion and Ethics	
Ezhuttacchan and His Age	.. C. Achuta Menon
Heritage of Karnataka	.. R. S. Mugali
Hindi Literature	.. Ram Awadh Dwivedi
History of Hindi Literature	.. K. B. Jindal
History of the Tamils	.. P. T. Srinivasa Iyengar
Holy Lake of the Acts of Rama.	.. W. D. P. Hill (Translation of Ram Charit Manas)
Hymns of the Alwars	.. J. M. S. Hooper
Indian Inheritance	.. General Editors : K. M. Munshi & N. Chandrasekhara Iyer
Indian Literature—Vol. I	... University of Calcutta
Indian Literature : Volume I Number I	.. Sahitya Akademi Publication, New Delhi
Indian Wisdom	.. M. Monier Williams
Jataka Vol. IV.	.. (Ed.) Prof. E. B. Cowell, Translated from Pali by W. H. D. Rouse, (Cambridge)
Kamba Ramayanam : A Study	.. V. V. S. Aiyar
Kamban and His Art	.. C. P. Venkatarama Iyer
Kashmiri Ramayana..by Divakara Prakasha Bhatta	... (Ed.) Sir George A. Grierson,
Kural or The Maxims of Tiruvalluvar	.. (Tr.) V. V. S. Aiyar
Leaves from Kamban	.. A. Srinivasa Raghavan

Lectures on the Ramayana	.. The Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri
Linguistic Survey of India Volume IX	.. Sir George A. Grierson
Literature in Modern Indian Languages	.. Ed.) V. K. Gokak
Mahabharata Vol. I (Adi and Siva Parva)	Pratap Chandra Roy
Modern Vernacular Literature of Hindustan	.. Sir George A. Grierson
Pampa Ramayana (Ramachandra Charita Purana (—by Nagachandra (Abhinava Pampa) An Elaborate Introduction in English	.. Rev. Fr. Kittel
Rama and Homer	.. Lilie Aurthur, London
Ramachandra : The Ideal King	.. Annie Besant
Ramayan (Translated from the original of Valmiki)	.. Makhan Lal Sen
Ramayana	.. C. Rajagopalachari
Ramayana	.. A. Weber (Translated from German by the Rev. D. C. Boyd)
Ramayanamu of Katta Varadaraju	.. (Ed.) N. Venkatà Rao
Ramayana of Tulasidas	.. F. S. Growse
Ramayana of Valmiki	.. C. R. Srinivasa Aiyangar
Some contributions of South Indian Culture	.. S. Krishnasami Aiyangar
Tamil Literature	.. M. S. Purnalingam Pillai
Valmiki Ramayana	.. N. Chandrasekhara Aiyer

Sanskrit

Adbhuta Ramayana	
Adhyatma Ramayana	
Ananda Ramayana	
Bhagwad Gita	
Janaki Haranam	.. Kumara Dasa

Kalidas Granthavali (containing all his works with Criticism)	... (Ed.) Sitaram Chaturvedi
Mahabharata	
Mahavir Charit by Bhavabhuti	.. (Ed.) Todar Mall
Prasanna Raghava	.. Jaideva (not of Bhaja-Govindam)
Rig Veda	
Sringara Manjari —by Saint Akbar Shah	.. (Ed.) V. Raghavan
Taittareeya Brahmana	
Tattva Sangraha Ramayana	.. (Ed.) V. Raghavan
Uttar Rama Charita —by Bhavabhuti	.. (Ed.) Shripad Krishna Belvalkar
Valmiki Ramayana	

PERIODICALS

Tamil

Ananda Vihadan (Chittira Ramayanam, P. Sri Acharya)	.. Madras
Bhaktan	.. Madras
Kalaimahal	.. Madras
Kalki	.. Madras
Pulavar Ulaham	.. Madurai
Sentamizh	.. Madurai

Hindi

Ajkal	.. Delhi
Alochana	.. Delhi
Dakshina Bharat	.. Madras
Dev Nagar	.. Delhi
Hindi Anusheelan	.. Allahabad
Nagri Pracharini Patrika	.. Kashi

Sahitya Sandesh .. Agra

Saraswati .. Allahabad

Shodh Patrika .. Udaipur

English

Annals of Oriental Research—University of Madras, Madras

Imperial Gazetteer of India- Volume II

Indian Antiquiry, Bombay (1872) 'Notes on Tulasidas' by Sir George Grierson

Journal of the Department of Letters, Calcutta University, Calcutta.

Journal of the Music Academy, Madras

Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of London, 1915

Tamil Culture—Madras

Vedanta Kesari—Calcutta



INDEX

INDEX

(Select index for Rama, Sita, Lakshmana, Hanuman, Ravana, **and** Kambar, Tulasidas, Valmiki and their Ramayanas, and Adhyatma **Rama-**yana from page 48 to page 553).

ERRATA

Page	Line	For	Read
5	26	place	places
13	11	oirth	birth
24	16	his	His
24	19	high	higher
25	37	two	two (a and b)
29	2	spread itself	has spread
30	13	of	on
32	2	of	on
33	13	meters	metres
38	33	is in	assumes
39	22	(a) Viradha	Viradha
41	22	for	during
41	27	Ezuttacchan	Ezhuttacchan
46	19	vedas	Vedas
47	7	to these	towards these
63	10	in about	around
68	34	state	states
71	11ff	chilappathi-haram	Chilappadi-haram
71	27	lesser	less
74	25	language	languages
74	31	Buddhism	Buddhism or Jainism
76	21	llke	like
76	27	river	all rivers
76	33	supreme destroyer	Supreme Destroyer
80	6	would	should
83	22-23	metapor	metaphor
85	32	metre	metres
90	28	added	added that
92	1	Grieves	Greaves
98	11	in	after
99	18	puranas	Puranas
99	19	vedas	Vedas
101	13	whom	Whom
104	4	Inacarnation	Incarnation
104	16	Shiva's	Shiva's spirit
104	32	style or	style of
106	3	adaucity	audacity
107	6	spell	Spell
107	8	name	Name
107	12	like	venerates
107	32	Gods	gods
107	34	states that	states
114	38	77	177
117	7	solar	Solar
125	7	of	on
125	13	to Mithila	Mithila
125	21	to Indra	on Indra
125	25	short	brief
128	13	his tent	thelr tents
131	5	slight	sight
131	12	hands	hand
132	9	spoke	speaks
132	23	seated	seats
133	4	way	ways
137	6	were	are
139	18	In	As in
141	3	called	called for
141	12	turn	torn
147	3	by	but
147	23	is to be	to be
148	9	who	and she
148	13	She replies	The poet says
162	3	; seeing her	. Seeing Manthara
162	8	omen	omens
162	14	of her	her
164	25	of her	her
165	4	live	lives
168	34	were	was
175	9	began	begin
177	13	came	has come
178	3	of	of very
178	13	truthfull	truthful
183	21	with	with the
184	14	him	him with
189	2	away	way
190	14	suggests	suggests to
190	15	dealing	to deal
190	15	suitability	suitably
194	7	, tells	tells
194	10	for	for the
195	20	creats	creates
198	2	satisfied	satisfies
200	6	as a	as an
202	19	hand.	hand'.
207	25	an	on
208	28	aRavana	Ravana
208	32	jewel	jewels
212	24	holds	clasps
216	6	Jataya	Jatayu
217	4	fleigned	feigned
218	15	his	of his
218	18	ascends	and ascends
223	5	Tulasida's	Tulasidas's
224	13	short	brief
225	13	Peakcocks	Peacocks
226	2-3	great ing	great wings: clouds cool them with their little rain drops, marching
226	11	effection	affection
226	14	is Hanuman	is. Hanuman
226	26	m(ooka	mooka
226	30		Delete the line.
227	Insert before line 9		Hanuman suggests to him to befriend his master Sugriva for tracing
227	17	Hanman	Hanuman
227	21	purtiy	purity
227	30	men	men sent
228	12	incamate	incarnate
229	23	glad of	glad to have a

Page	Line	For	Read
230	10	conforms	confirms
230	11	hereafter	thereafter
231	5	Sguriva	Sugriva
231	?2	befriend	befriends
232	20	epice	epics
234	4	but it	but in
234	19	Uuon	Upon
236	24	tries	tried
237		Interchange lines 10 and 11.	
239	1	trying	tieing
241	20	known	known."
242		Page number to be corrected as 242	
245	24	garlend	garland
246	13	equisite	exquisite
247	8	Kishkinda	Kishkindha
248	17	explain	explains
249	15	Kamba	Kambar,
249	20	inPrashavana	in Pravarshana
250	12	Palace	palace
250	17	widohood	widowhood
250	30	Lakshama	Lakshmana
251	25	afraid	gets afraid
252	30	angger	anger
255	2	Suriva	Sugriva
259	17	mightly	mighty
259	24	pathwoy	pathway
261	24	on	to
262	6	sucide	suicide
263		Line 4 to be read along with line 3.	
266	1	spics	epics
267	29	Jambava	Jambavan
269	4	about	as to
270	3	mightly	mighty
272	3	Sulasa	Surasa
273	2	size. the	size. The
273	28	foll	fall
275	14	sorow	sorrow
275	21	hastity	chastity
277	13	falsfied	falsified
279	2	cna	can
280	10	Stia	Sita
281		Add above line 8--(c) In Kambar, Hanuman identifies Sita from the description	
283	21	that the	that
288	24	Vibhaisbana	Vibhishana
288	28	was	is
289	2	roungh	rough
289	11	Tulasida's	Tulasidas's
291	30	was	is
291	31	felt	feels
292	2	, she	. She
293	19	Rakshasas	Rakshas
295	12	knight	Knight
296	20	drowing	drowning
297	7	revealed	reveals
300	22	lanugishing	languishing
305	4	repents	repents for
308	19	are	is
312	9	get	gets
315	10	hanuman	Hanuman
319	4	of joy	joy
320	28	winger	winged
321	5	direction	directions
325	10	called	assembled
326	22	they	thy
327	17	will	, he adds, will
328	1	This	That
330	9	monkeys,	monkeys
333	25	perfaet	Perfect
336	2	smiling	smilingly
343	12	other	others
345	10	how	as to how
346	21	how	as to how
346	32	Shukta	Shuka
348	26	dars	darts
350	4	leave to	leave for
350	6	army	the army
352	24	Sarama	Sarana
353	14	orders	orders for
360	12	four	the four
376	21	so	terribly
377	28	get	gets
381	2	repeas	repeats
382	19	a	to Atikaya a
385	4	was	is
394	21	Lake	Like
397	7	shower	showers
399	14	releived	getting releaved
399	32	was	is
402	19	bring	brings
405	5	and	including
410	20	fist	fists
412	16	was	is
413	11	magic	the magic
415	31	retreat ?	retreat
416	9	non	none
417	20	can	could
425	14	rtes	rites
425	20	recites	recite
425	20	vedas	Vedas
431	18	may	my
433	29	approached	approaches
435	27	Only	Only in
436	22	Agastya.	Agastya,
441	12	Ayodhya,	Ayodhya'.
443	10	extrmeely	extremely
443	33	grant	grand
445	7	thtm hte	them the
445	29	stones	precious stones
446	2	Also he first	Firstly, he
447	11	water	the water
447	19	king	benefactor
448	1	rules	rules over
449	5	leaves	leaves for Kishkindha
449	10	you.	you ,
450	7	is	are
451	7	out	cut
453	27	comparng	comparing
456	33	of	or
457	34	Shamboo	Shambhu
466	19	Their	Rama's
466	19	magic	illusion
468	24	hand	hands

Page	Line	For	Read
474	10	h's	his
475	21	beahty	beauty
475	27	camu	camp
476	27	counterfiet	counterfeit
477	23	was	is
480	5	for	her
481	34	life	like
484	20	belives	believes
485	14	her	. Her
486	10	instantaneously.	instantaneou-sly,
436	14	eightly	eighty
490	30	5	6
490	31	5	6
490	32	5	6
494	21	naryily	narily
501	28	black	so black
501	30	on rushing	onrushing
503	30	means	literally means
504	17	Dasharata	Dasharatha
504	17	hears	hears about
512	7	an	on
512	25	in	concerning
514	8	as	as the
514	10	inform	pass on
515	31	taking	talking
516	1	For	For,
518	22	Poem	poem
519	16	Manimeihalai	Manimehalai
525	6	meter	metre
526	24	meters	metres
529	15	Gods	'gods
529	30	direspeet	disrespect
530	11	post	poet
531	10	first	at first
531	13	first	at first
532	6	case	caste
534	4	interpolation	interpolations
534	9	woman	women
534	33	Russia	Russian
546	12	that,	that
549	22	infame	infamy
551	21	creator	Creator
554	16	for	Far
555	5	were	was
555	7	at first	first
557	15	the word	of the word
570	22	474	119, 474
573	1	Ezhuttacran	Ezhuttacchan
573	4	350,	350, 352, 370, 388, 422, 430, 438,
573	6	467	144, 467
581	13	486	3, 486

